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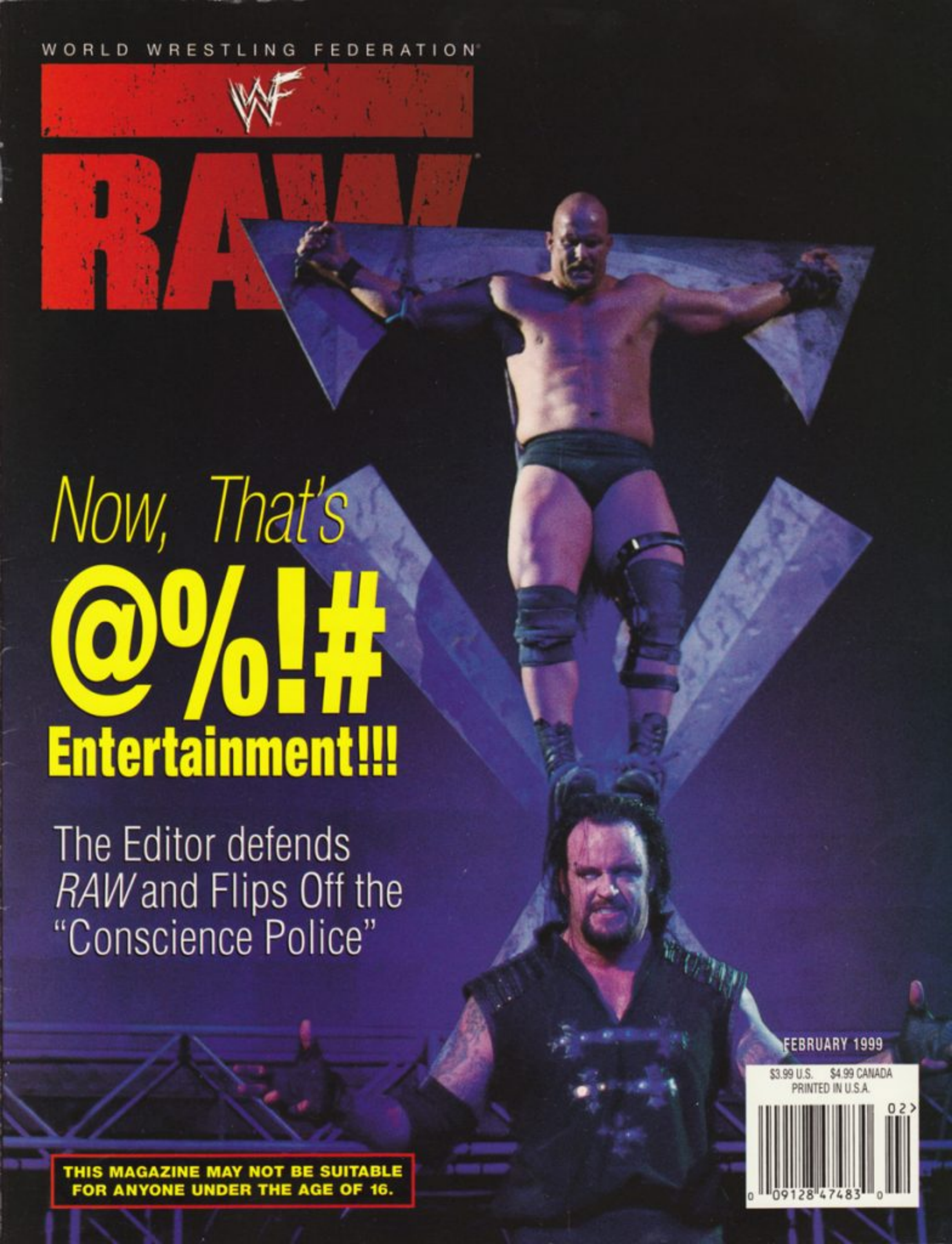

Now, That's @%!# Entertainment!!!

The Editor defends *RAW* and Flips Off the "Conscience Police"

FEBRUARY 1999

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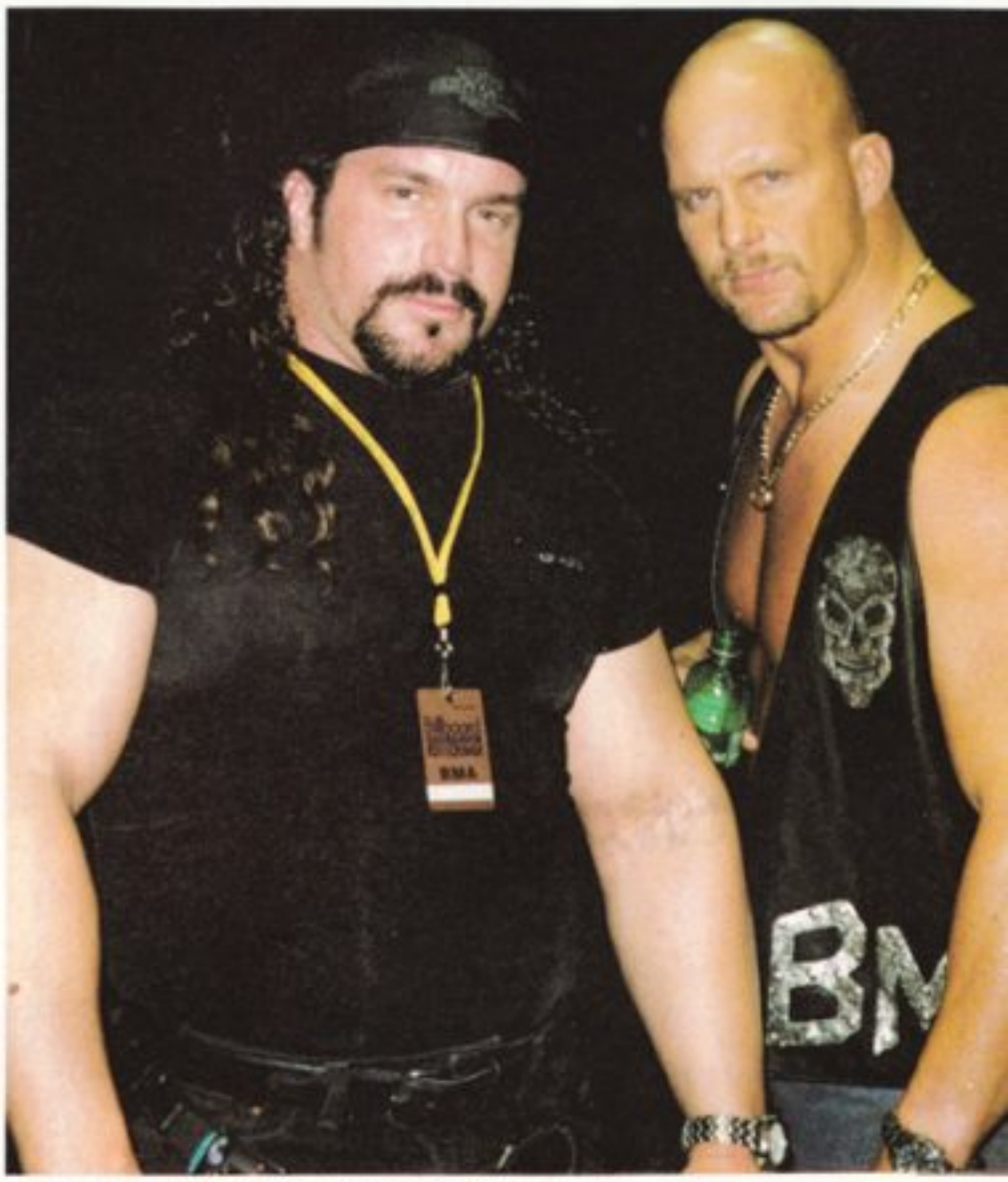

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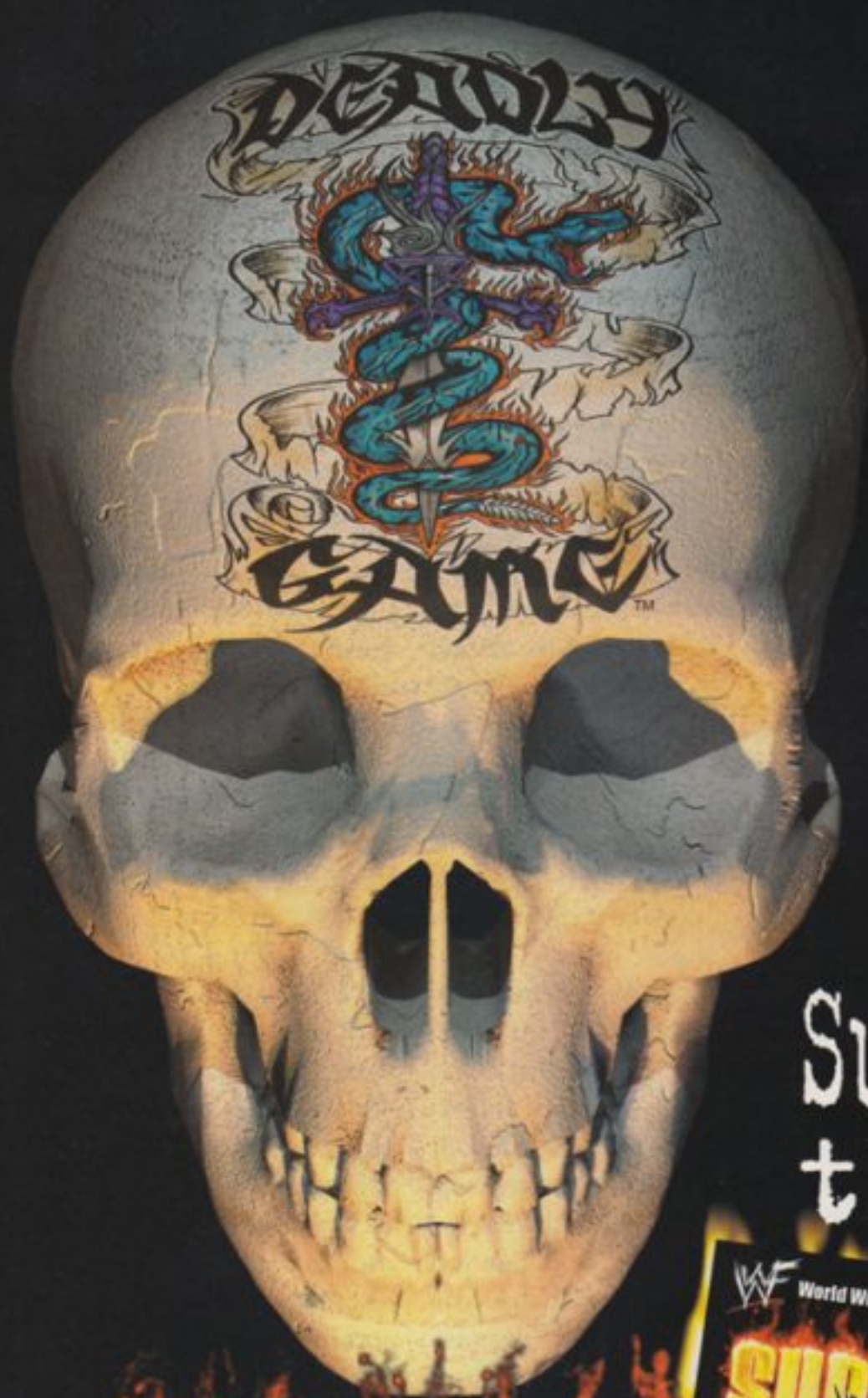

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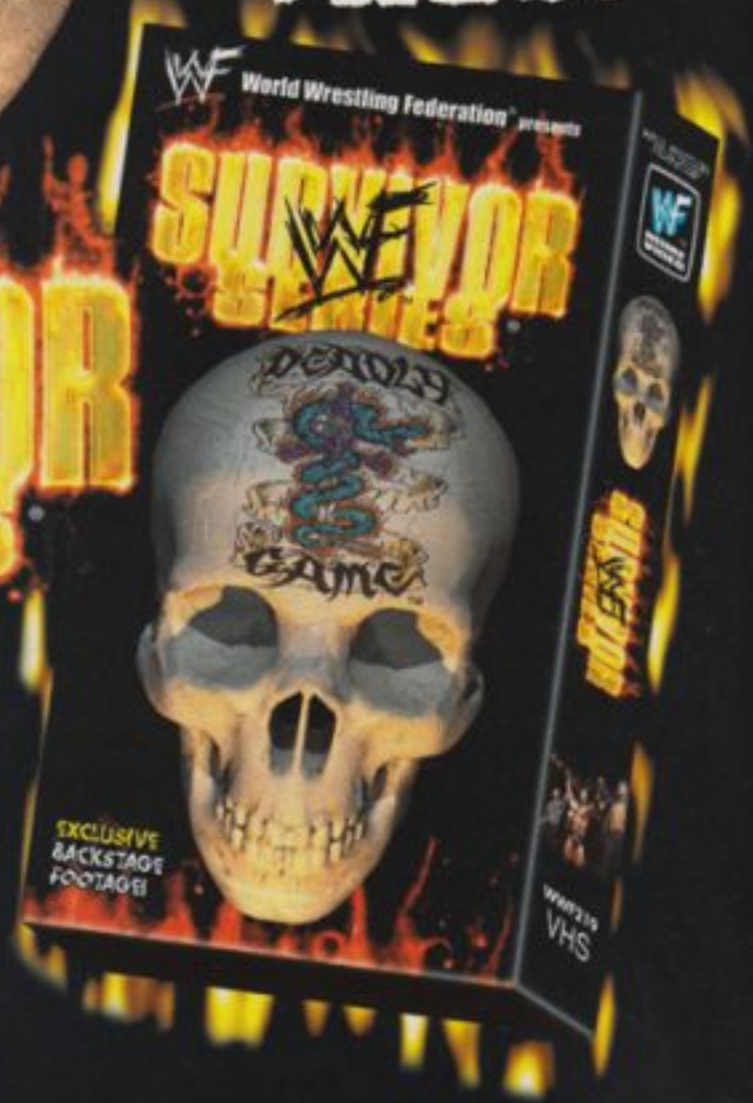

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January 12, 1999

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RUSSO RAW

A Commentary By Vince Russo

Who Decides?

DISCLAIMER: THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS COLUMN ARE SOLELY THOSE OF VINCE RUSSO, AND NOT NECESSARILY SHARED BY THOSE REPRESENTING THE WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION AND TITAN SPORTS.

THAT'S THE ETERNAL QUESTION.

Who decides what's right... and what's wrong? Who decides what's acceptable... or... unacceptable. Who decides if we can... or... can't? Simple question. I just want somebody to answer it for me. What? What's so difficult? Everybody's always strappin' us with dos and don'ts. I just want to know who's responsible for this shit!!! I'm not. Hell. Anything goes with me. If it's LEGAL—yes you can!!! Illegal—draw the line. Real simple, isn't it? If it is, then why do so many wannabe authorities have certain objects caught up their tokuses?!!!

The Conscience Police—those with nothin' better to do than to serve as our consciences—to dictate to us right from wrong. And it seems that the Conscience Police only slap the cherry on top of the squad car when it comes to that "creative envelope". Perhaps the two words that the C.P. dread most. You see, in their law the main commandment is—CREATIVITY UNACCEPTABLE. Follow "the rulz"—stick to the "rulz". Don't stray. The envelope is fine just where it is—no pushin' allowed. And just in case you attempt to push... WE'LL NAIL YOUR ASS!!! Just ask Howard Stern—Public Enemy #1 on the Conscience Police's Most Wanted List.

I don't know this for a fact, but I hold the Conscience Police responsible for determining that the middle finger is an obscene gesture. Think about it. Thumbs up—good. #1—good. Peace sign—good. I love you (thumb, index finger, pinky)—good. Even placing horns (index finger and pinky) behind somebody else's head is acceptable. But you put up that "middle" finger and you're being marched right down to the principal's office. Why is that? Who decided that? And with that... who decided on the "curse" words? Funk—good, but change that n to a c and somebody's getting' their mouth washed out with soap!!! Who's the "clue-prit"? I'm tellin' ya—IT'S THE DAMN CONSCIENCE POLICE!!!

Bad boyz, bad boyz, whatcha gonna do—whatcha gonna do when they come for you?

And I knew they were comin'. I guaranteed that the Conscience Police were gonna be in full force. When the Man from the Dark Side lashed Stone Cold Steve Austin to a larger-than-life statue of the Undertaker's symbol—somebody was gonna pay!!! You see, in the eyes of the Conscience Police this was a full-fledged CRUCIFIXION!!! Oh, believe me—they know a crucifixion when they see it. Tie a man to an Undertaker symbol and you've got a Conscience Police felony. This was gonna be a sad, sad day in the history of the World Wrestling Federation.

TWO WORDS: EAT ME!!!

CRUCIFY—TO PUT TO DEATH BY NAILING TO A CROSS AND LEAVING TO DIE.

Thank you, Daniel Webster. Now, the way I saw it there was no execution, there was no nailing, there was no cross and there was no death. Therefore, NO CRUCIFIXION. However, even if it was a simulated "crucifixion", for argument's sake—SO WHAT?! Who made that taboo? History records that a man—an EXTREMELY important man, according to theologians—died on a cross. History also documents that a ship called the Titanic went down several years ago, killing many people. Now, why is one topic considered forbidden and the other isn't? Is it because religion is involved? Who decided that? Now, I'm as religious as the next guy, but if I sinned for going to see *Jesus Christ Superstar* on Broadway then I apologize!!! We all have our own beliefs, and those beliefs should be precisely that—OUR OWN. Don't dictate what is unacceptable just because it may not be acceptable to you. If you don't like something on television, it's real simple—change the channel. Watch something else. But don't get in my way. Don't deprive me of being open to creativity. Don't deny me the opportunity to open my mind and explore. Don't stunt my damn growth!!! If anyone decides for me—or my kidz—it's gonna be me!!!

So, then—WHO DECIDES? The answer is simple—YOU do. Once you start letting other people influence you—you lose your freedom. You lose your individuality. You lose the right to be you. You lose the right to hold your middle finger high and proud in the face of the Conscience Police.

Later. ■

Who's Movin' In on the Pimp's Turf?

How many PLAYAS does it take?... It seems there may be ANOTHER PIMP in the World Wrestling Federation! This one, however, is so far keeping his or her business ON THE "DOWN LOW". Not wanting to start a war, this OLD SCHOOL MACK has been doing his business behind the scenes! THE GODFATHER knows that someone is trying to move in on his action and when PAPA finds out who it is, he will be SHOCKED and may be asked "WHO'S YOUR DADDY?!"

First, Wedding Bells... Next, LOVE CHILD?

If the rumors are true, TOO SEXY and TOO HOT will be a THREESOME before long! I, the INFORMER, have heard that BRIAN and SCOTT have even been contacting ADOPTION AGENCIES about the possibility of adding another member to their "family"! Because of their busy schedules, TOO MUCH will allegedly look for an OLDER CHILD!

OWNERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

Don't be surprised if the McMAHON FAMILY offers SHAWN MICHAELS a piece of the pie! That's right! I, the INFORMER, have heard that apparently PARTIAL OWNERSHIP is in the works for the HEARTBREAK COMMISSIONER. It may be the only way to keep SHAWN happy... and QUIET, if you know what I, the INFORMER, mean!

The End is Near?

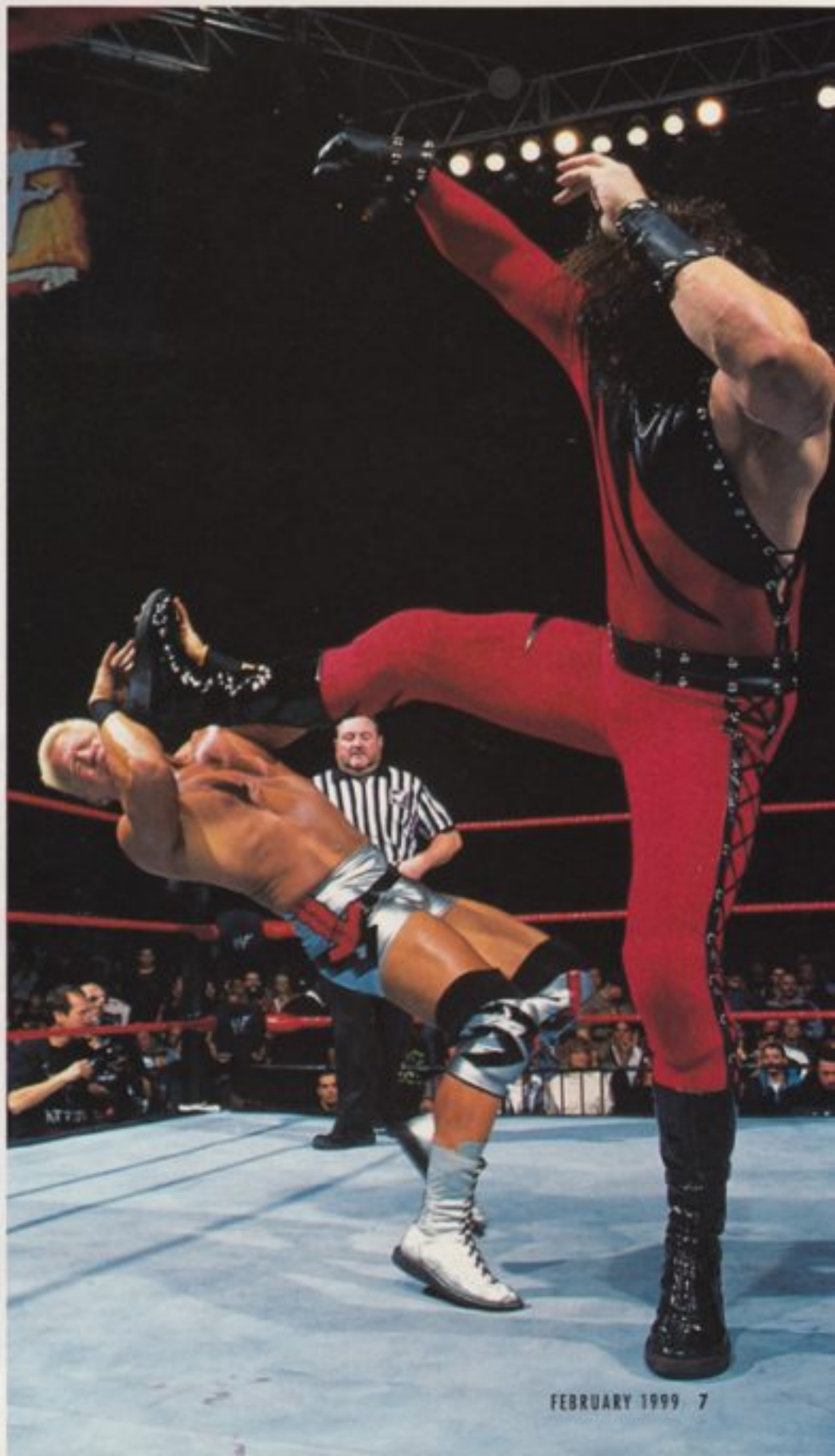
With clouds swirling around the World Wrestling Federation, thanks to the MINISTRY OF DARKNESS, you have to wonder when the DAY OF RECKONING will arrive? I, the INFORMER, am predicting that this summer there will be a WAR BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL which will unfortunately have MANY CASUALTIES!

Once a BITCH...

I guess no one should be surprised by TERRI RUNNELS. Her actions of late have many wondering what will be next. I, the INFORMER, am telling you not to be FOOLED BY APPEARANCES! Things may not truly be as they appear! Both MEN AND WOMEN could wind up being "SCREWED" by this WOULD BE VICTIM!!!

Kane's Life Comes Full Circle?

There is someone from KANE'S CHILDHOOD we never heard about! Apparently, this OLD FRIEND has tried to contact the BIG RED MACHINE with little success so far. However, I, the INFORMER, intercepted a card left by this FORGOTTEN MEMORY and it read "COME HOME!" with the initials B.L. on the bottom! Stay tuned!



Letters To The Editor:

Letter

Dear Editor,

I just finished reading the December issue of *RAW Magazine*, and I have one problem. In Jim Ross' "Ragin' Ross" column, I think that one of his statements is a little off track. He says that Al Snow is giving everybody headaches, but I think Al is one of the best athletes ever to enter the World Wrestling Federation. Ross may not get along with Snow, or was maybe insulted by Al when he was Leif Cassidy, but that's no reason to say that about him in the column. I'd like to give J.R. some advice: he should give Al and Head some time, because before long "they" will be one of the hottest superstars in the sport!

Alex Reynoso
New Jersey

E-mail

Dear Editor,

Thank you for doing an article on X-Pac in the December issue of *RAW Magazine*. The article was very interesting not just for the facts, but for all the things he's been through in life. I think it's great when you guys take a "behind-the-scenes" look now and then. I was there at Sacramento [California] the night he won the European title and the crowd was roaring after the match. If I may make one suggestion: in the next story it would be great to see input from the man himself. The photos in the article were also incredible. Tom Buchanan and Rich Freeda are great photographers! Female fans like me enjoy variety, and it was nice to see it.

"Lorie"
pangur@gvn.net

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Letter

Dear Editor,

I know what everyone is thinking about Shawn Michaels... that he's a "sell-out." Well, I have a couple of things to say about that, and I don't think my comments will be too popular with the public. Shawn Michaels is NOT a sell-out! For a little under a year everyone was wondering what would happen when Shawn came back. Would he still be in DX? Well, I think the answer was a given—what he did to X-Pac was for revenge. Now, I'm a big fan of DX, both the original and the new one. I think that HHH made a big mistake when he dropped Shawn from the group

after *WrestleMania* XIV. HHH and the rest of DX paid for that. Personally, if I were Shawn I would have done the same thing.
Patricia Garcia
Fort Hood, Texas

E-mail

Dear Editor,
I don't think it's fair that people boo Mr. McMahon in arenas all over the country. Don't the people realize that Vince single-handedly took plain old "wrestling" and turned it into sports-entertainment? And whatever Vince does, he always makes it clear he's doing it for the people. What does that get him in return? 19,000 fans chanting, "Asshole! Asshole!" He doesn't deserve that type of treatment from anybody. Vin Man, keep up the good work! The fans will realize their error someday.
Vinny Alfano
l.h.alfano@snet.net

E-mail

Dear Editor,
In the December issue of *RAW Magazine*, I read an article called "48 Hours With The Texas Rattlesnake". I must say I'm glad you guys show how the superstars prepare for a live event, and it gives the fans a chance to see what goes on behind the scenes in their lives. The pictorial just goes to show that competing in the business isn't always glamorous. Even a guy like Stone Cold Steve Austin is human on the road. What it does show, however, is that the superstars who succeed living on the road have a true love of the sport.
Nelson Torres
Insanewrestling@hotmail.com

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–Stone Cold

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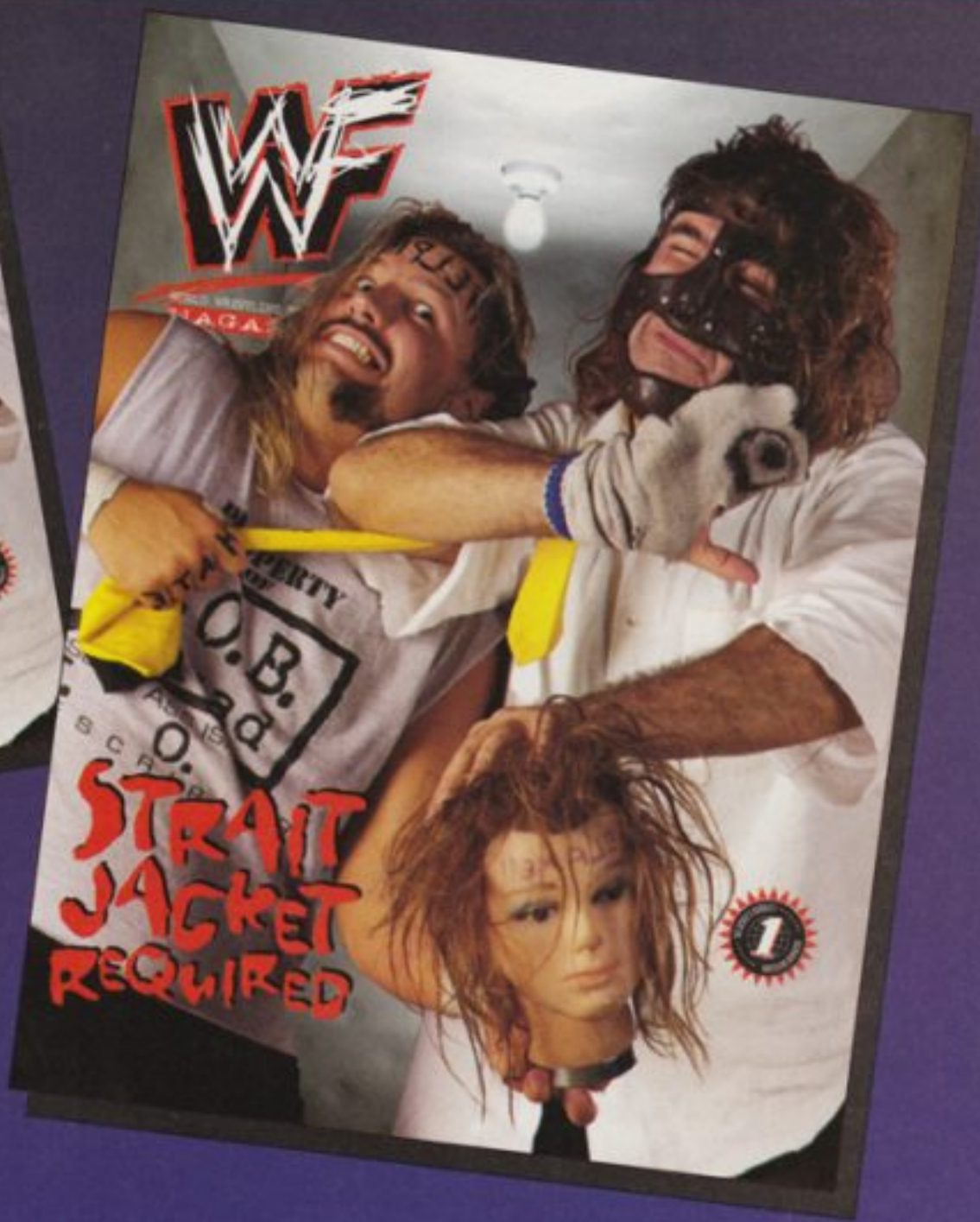

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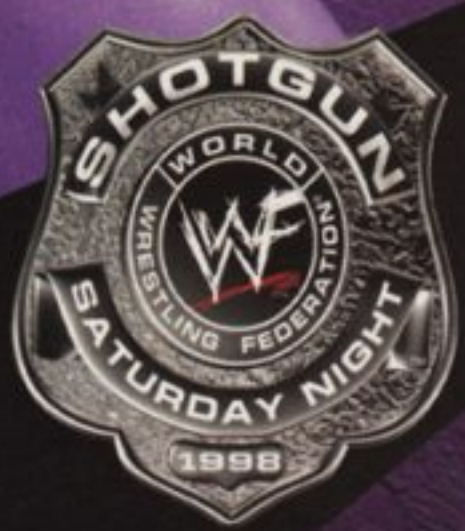
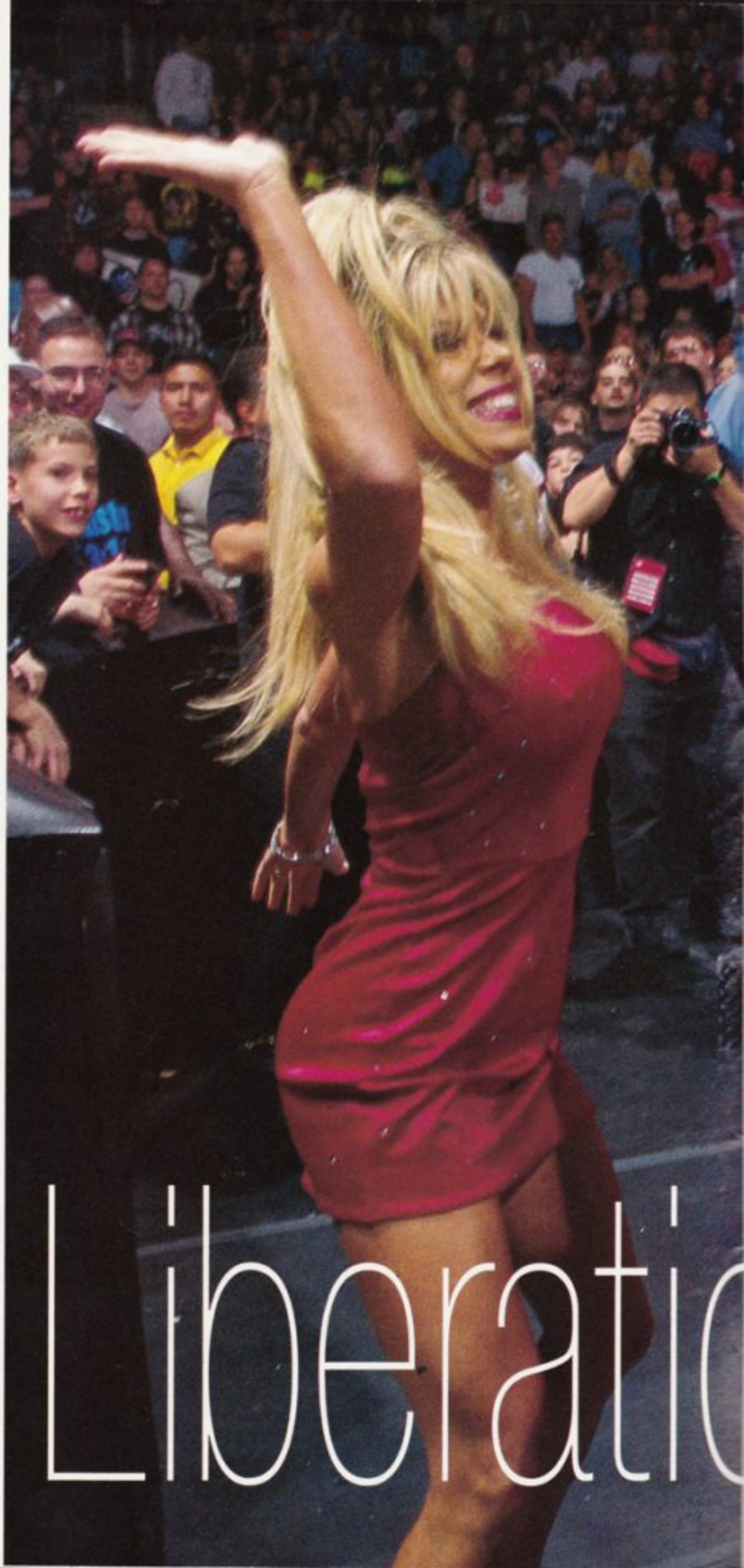


Coming to a TV near you.

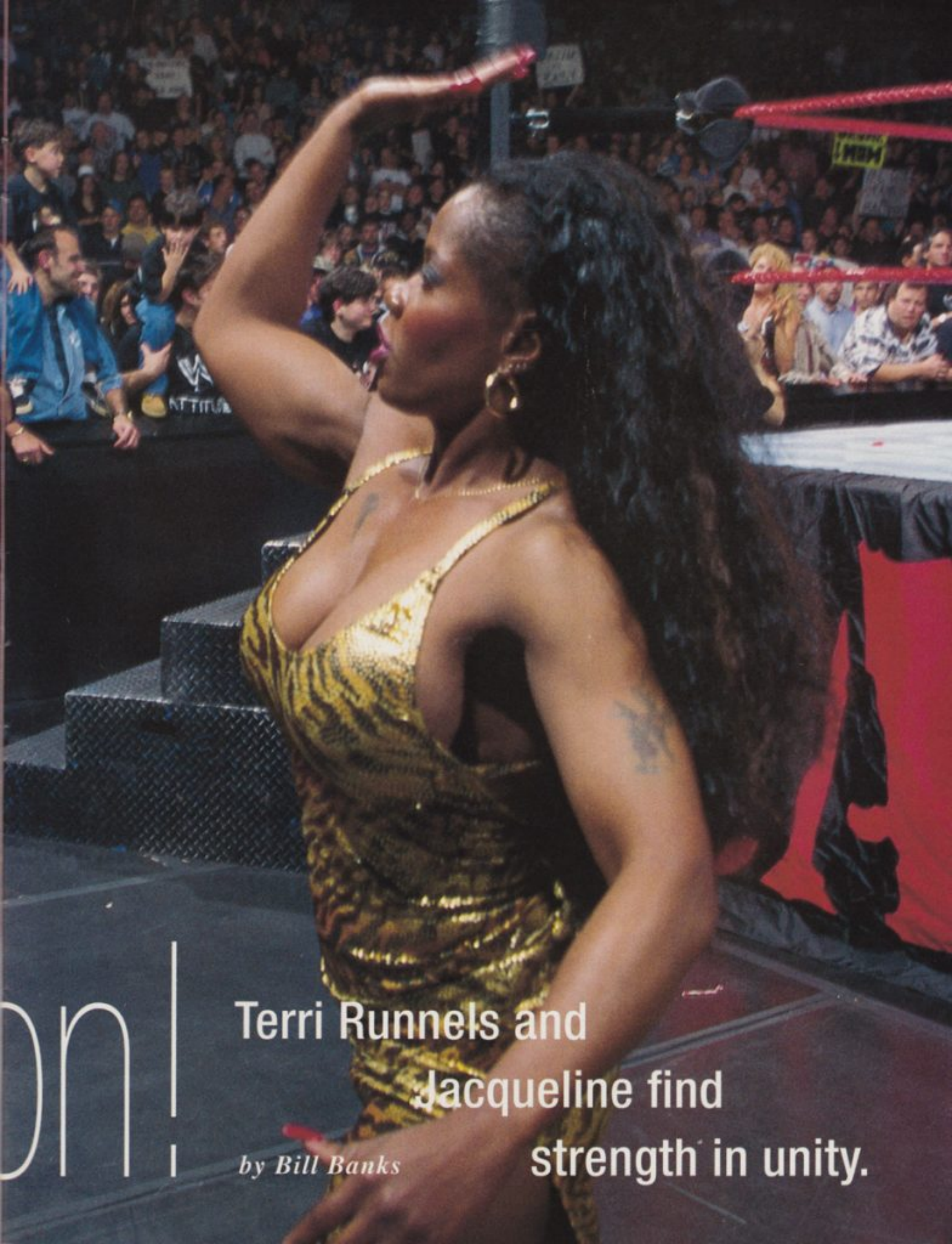
It all started as far back as the dawn of humanity—man was always considered the more aggressive sex. In many cultures, acquiring more than one wife was commonplace. Marriages were prearranged and women had little or no choice in who they wed. Considered mere servants of their husbands, women waited hand and foot on their spouses. Even into the 1950s, the portrait of the perfect American family was the husband who "brought home the bacon" and the wife who cooked and cleaned house.



Liberatio

TODAY, IN MOST modern countries, that picture has changed. Thanks in large part to Gloria Steinem and the Women's Liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s, men now find themselves in a much different position. Women have gained power in every aspect of society. Long kept under the thumb of the opposite sex, women simply aren't going to take it anymore. Gender equality is becoming a reality, and thanks to Terri Runnels and Jacqueline the era of the "radical chick" has been revived in the World Wrestling Federation.

As the saying goes, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." Marc Mero, Val Venis, Goldust and others have found this out firsthand, as Terri and Jacqueline exacted their own brand of revenge via "Girl Power." After being jilted by their lovers, these



on!

Terri Runnels and Jacqueline find strength in unity.

by Bill Banks

femmes fatales found a common bond in their disdain for the men who had cast them aside. Not only are they out to prove that they don't need men to be successful, they're willing to take everything the men have if necessary.

In the movie *The First Wives Club*, Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn and Diane Keaton portrayed spouses who helped their husbands build successful businesses. All three were eventually dropped by their mates for younger, sexier "trophy" wives. So, the three women devised a diabolical plot to get retribution by bringing their exs to their knees.

Together, Terri and Jacqueline opted for the same thing... and turned their rage on their male offenders. After bringing Goldust and Mero down with the unkindest blows, these two women found strength in unity. With confidence brimming, they treated themselves to makeovers and expensive dresses. It became "Ladies' Night Out" each week on *RAW*, and male superstars were put on notice that Terri and Jacqueline would hit 'em where it hurts.

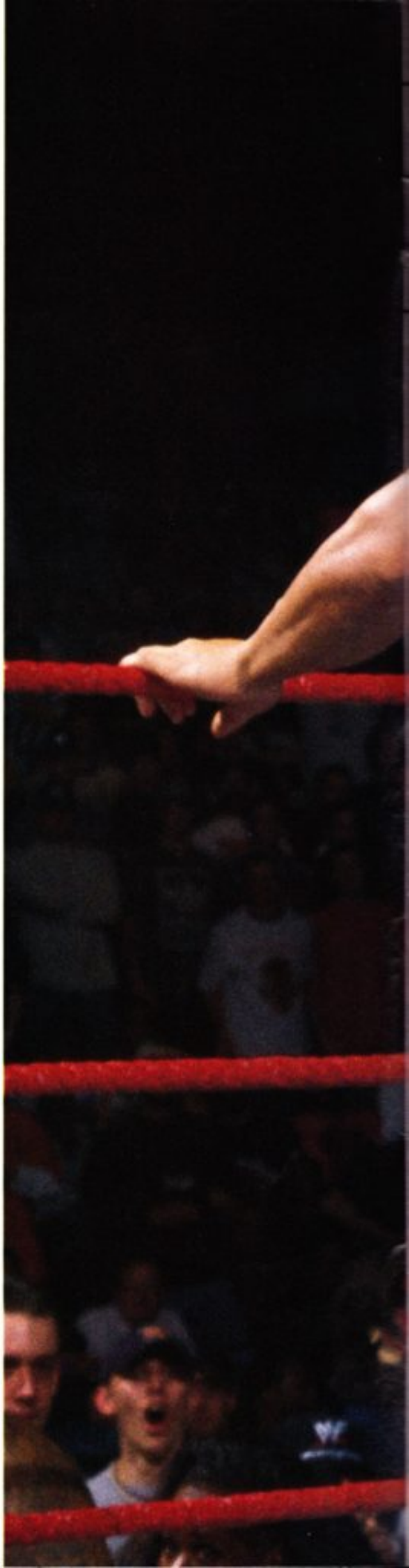
In recent years, certain events have prompted women to take a stand against men. For example, musical rapper Queen Latifah fought violence against women which sparked a movement in the industry. In her hit song *U.N.I.T.Y.*, Latifah called for unity among women, and advised her fans to fight back against male rappers who label women "bitches" or "hos" in their music. "Who you callin' a bitch?!" became a feminist battle cry. A revolution that opened new doors for talented women rappers began.

Terri and Jacqueline's cause could potentially do the same. For the first time in Federation history, women are taking a united stand against their male counterparts—and winning. Could their philosophy rub off on other female superstars, such as Sable, Chyna and Debra McMichael? Less than a decade ago, women in the wrestling business were labeled "valets" and offered up as distraction to opponents or eye candy for the fans. Debra, Chyna and in particular Sable shattered such a glass ceiling. If Terri and Jacqueline convinced them to join their united force, it might topple even the strongest male faction, Team Corporate!

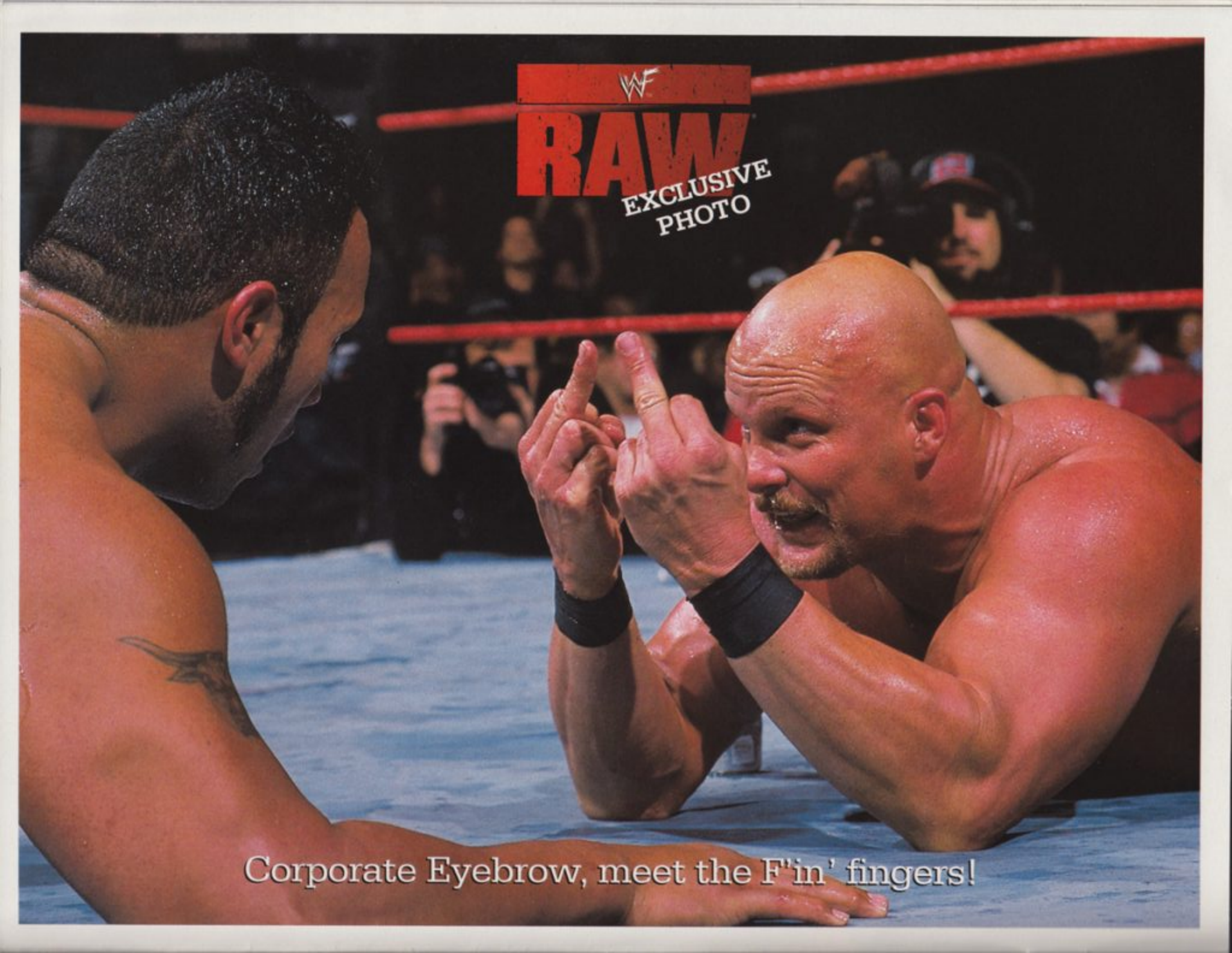
Another example—as extreme as it may have been—was the retribution Lorena Bobbit inflicted on her husband John Wayne Bobbit. After severing his manhood, millions of women applauded Lorena for her action. While the inevitable jokes that followed made many men cringe, they also strike new fear in the male ego. As despicable as her actions may have been, Lorena inspired a new generation of women to resist male domination. Women have the power and aren't afraid to use it.

Today, women are rising up the ranks of the sport in strides once considered unimaginable. Blending beauty, persuasion and power, Terri, Jacqueline, Debra, Chyna and Sable can't be pushed around. If not for Chyna, DX might have strayed off the track long ago. Sable has revitalized a new era in women's wrestling, and Debra has the potential to be one of the most influential women in the sport. Look no further than Linda McMahon, CEO of the World Wrestling Federation and wife of owner Vince McMahon—one of the most influential women in the business and a perfect example of how far women have come... and how far they can go.

In a way, Terri and Jacqueline have become pioneers in sports-entertainment. In a predominantly male industry, they are among the first to assert their power over those who've held them back. Their actions may seem inciteful but show that they're not afraid to fight back. After all, Gloria Steinem went through the same battles 30 years ago and today is considered an icon for women's liberation. If other women athletes join Terri and Jacqueline's cause, perhaps one day male superstars will be waiting hand and foot on these "radical chicks". ■



Together, Terri and Jacqueline are exacting revenge from superstars such as Val Venis by hitting men where it hurts.



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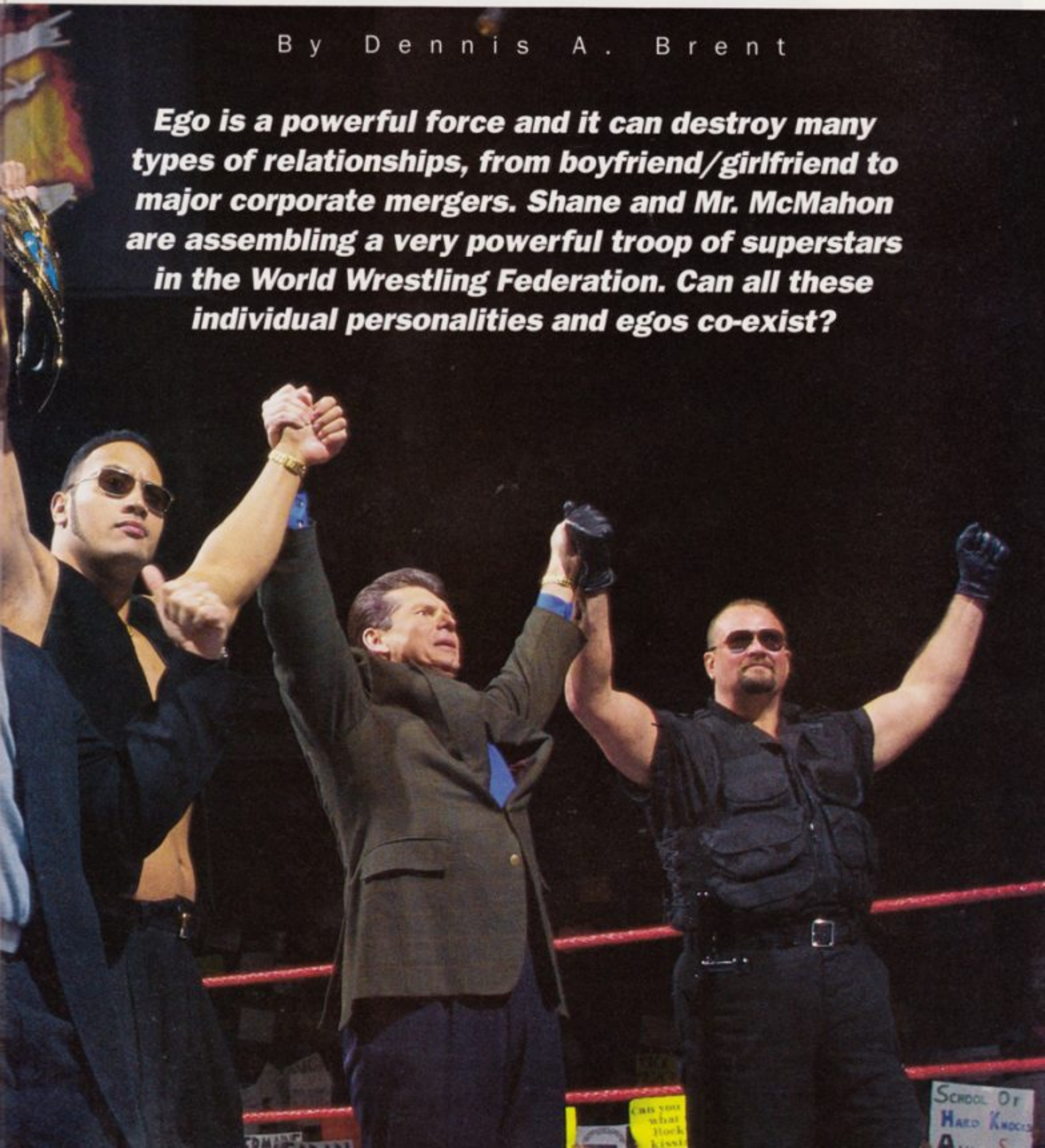
Could Egos Topple

Team Corporate?

By Dennis A. Brent

Ego is a powerful force and it can destroy many types of relationships, from boyfriend/girlfriend to major corporate mergers. Shane and Mr. McMahon are assembling a very powerful troop of superstars in the World Wrestling Federation. Can all these individual personalities and egos co-exist?



WHAT A STRANGE GROUP they comprise—The Rock, the Big Boss Man, Ken Shamrock and Shawn Michaels, plus Mr. McMahon, Shane and Mr. McMahon's "stooges"—Patterson, Brisco and Slaughter. These are men who would NEVER have hung out together before. The Rock and the Big Boss Man have about as much in common as Sgt. Slaughter and Shawn Michaels do, which is absolutely NOTHING!

So, why ARE they together? Four words: "MONEY", "MORE MONEY" and "POWER". Mr. McMahon made

(Above) Can Ken Shamrock trust a superstar who once tried to beat his brains in with a nightstick? (Right) Money puts a smile on The Rock's face, but what if Mr. McMahon misses a payment.

(Left) What if the Boss Man and Shamrock become jealous of the attention received by the Corporate Champion? (Below) The Rock is clearly the centerpiece of Team Corporate.

deals with all these men to carry out his wishes, and if they do they'll be handsomely rewarded with money and special powers.

The Rock was a VERY popular fan favorite, but was he concerned about turning his back on the people and joining Mr. McMahon's "corporate empire"? Not a bit, as Mr. McMahon ensured that The Rock won the World Wrestling Federation Championship. Shawn Michaels was also at the peak of his popularity with millions of fans anxiously awaiting his return to the Federation. When he finally did return, however, he blew off what the fans wanted and did what makes Shawn happy (which didn't surprise this writer actually, if you look at his history). By being appointed the new Commissioner, Shawn now has more stroke in the power structure of the World Wrestling Federation than he's ever had before.

I've spoken to Vince McMahon, as well as Shane, about this, and they have said that they own the company and it will be run the way THEY want it to be run. They are tired of renegades like Steve Austin and some others who think they are bigger than the

company. So they have recruited a crew of superstars who will be loyal and do things the way the McMahons want them done.

This brings us back to the question, Can all of these individual egos co-exist in Team Corporate? Remember earlier last year when Shawn Michaels was mercilessly taunting Commissioner Slaughter to his face? Remember Shawn wearing a face shield with mini windshield wipers insinuating that Slaughter spits when he talks? Can these two totally different individuals now be co-workers for Mr. McMahon's Team Corporate without arguing and fighting between themselves? It's hard to imagine, but so far they are making it work.

Some say that the combination of The Rock and the Heartbreak Kid is a powder keg ready to explode. Would Commissioner Michaels tolerate The Rock telling him to "Know his role"?

And what about Ken Shamrock and The Rock? What will happen if—and when—The Rock one day tells Shamrock to "Know his damn role" or he'll "lay the smack down" on him? Even though these two are now both members of Team Corporate, I don't see them going to many company picnics together. But they are co-existing. And the threat of the Big Boss Man is always present. Boss Man is 100-percent loyal to Mr. McMahon and would take ANY of these guys out in a minute if Mr. McMahon perceived disloyalty, so they always have to be aware of that threat. The Big Boss Man is not there to be a friend, but to enforce Mr. McMahon's orders.

My guess is that they can co-exist, as long as the money is flowing and things are going well for the group. I expect this group to be very successful because for the first time, good or bad, they all have a common mentor—and that is Mr. McMahon, along with his money and his backing. I suggest that the other Federation Superstars dig their heels in because it's going to be an uphill battle if they're not part of Team Corporate. ■

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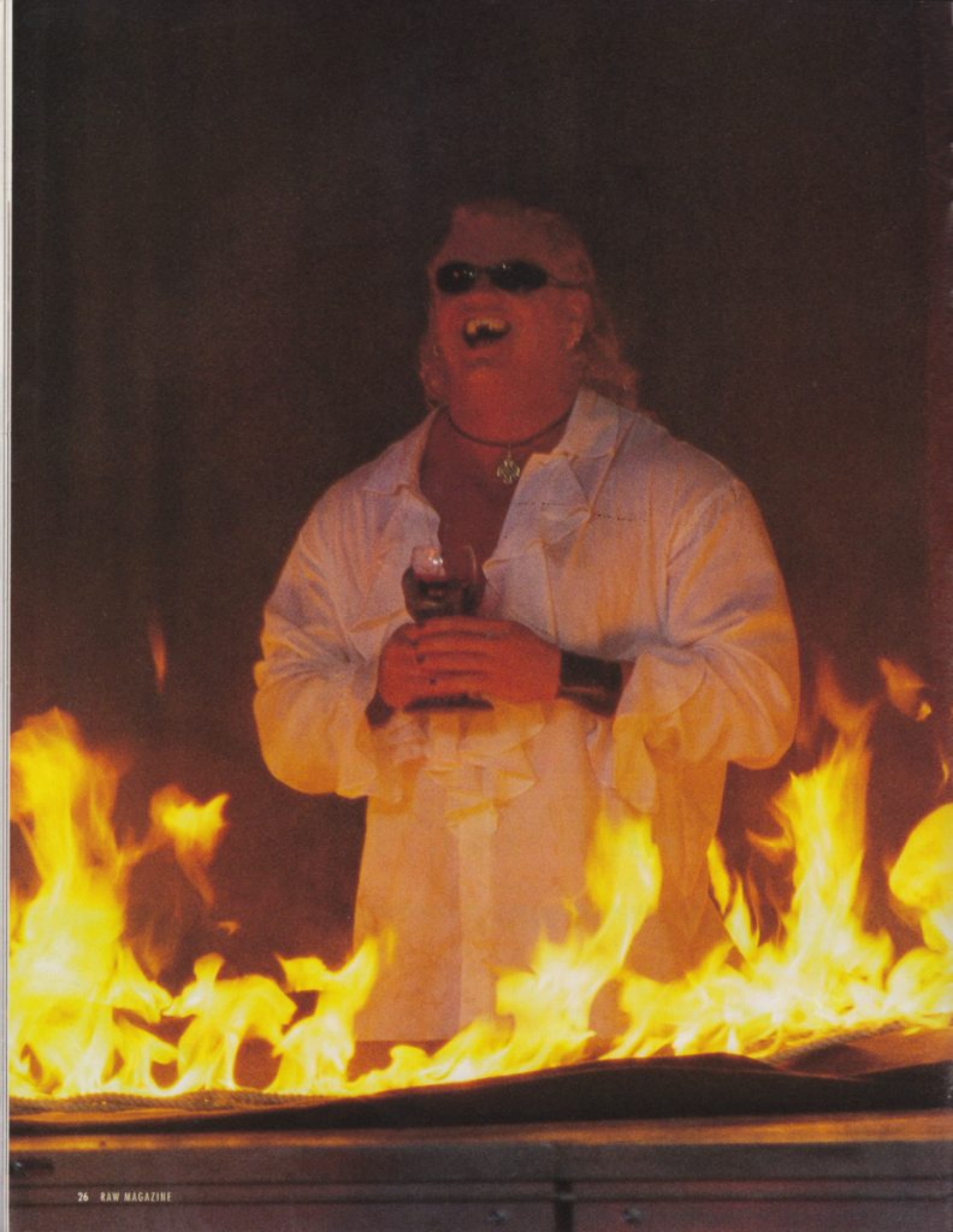
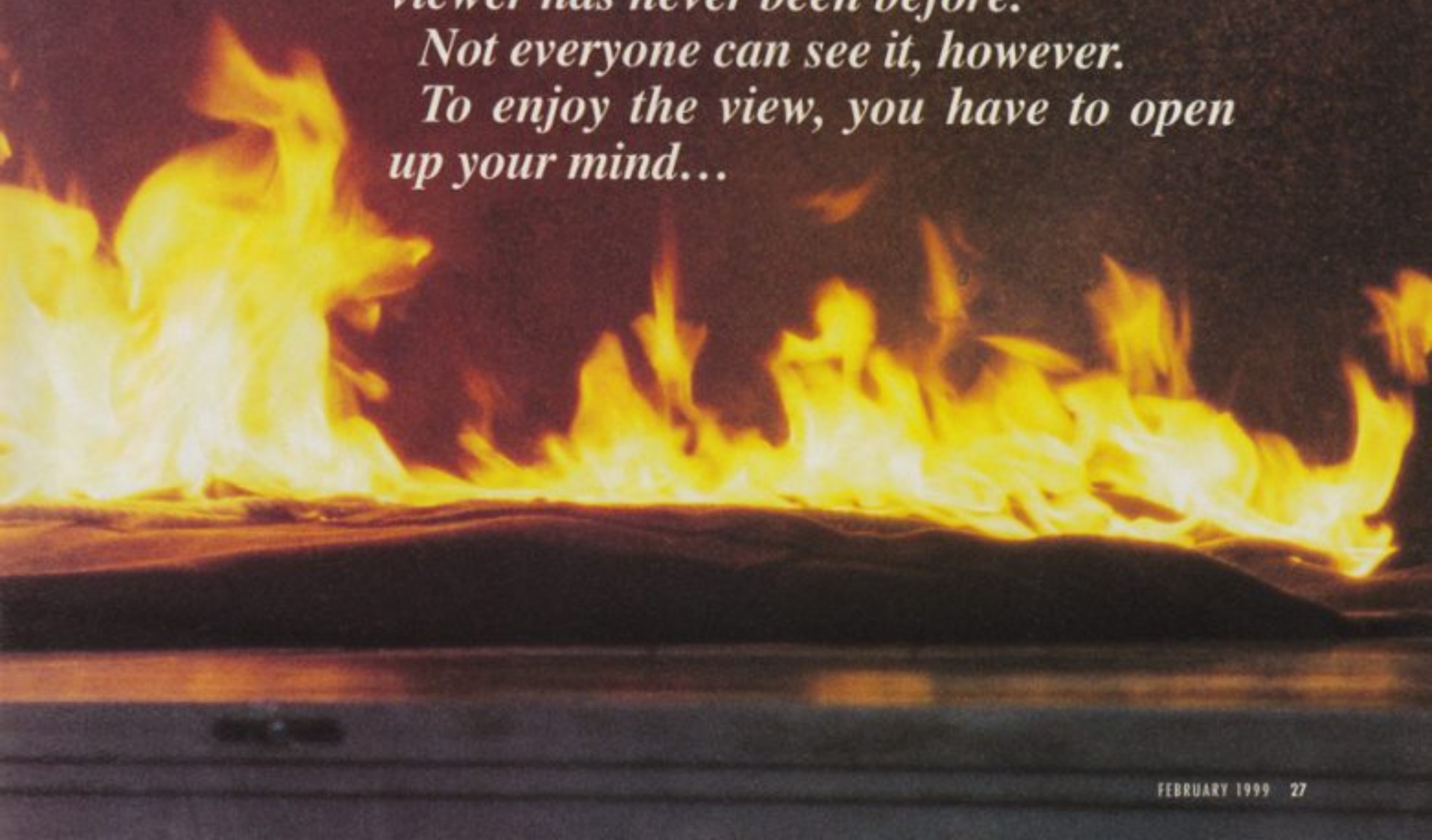


When Rasslin' Turned Hollywood

by Kevin Kelly

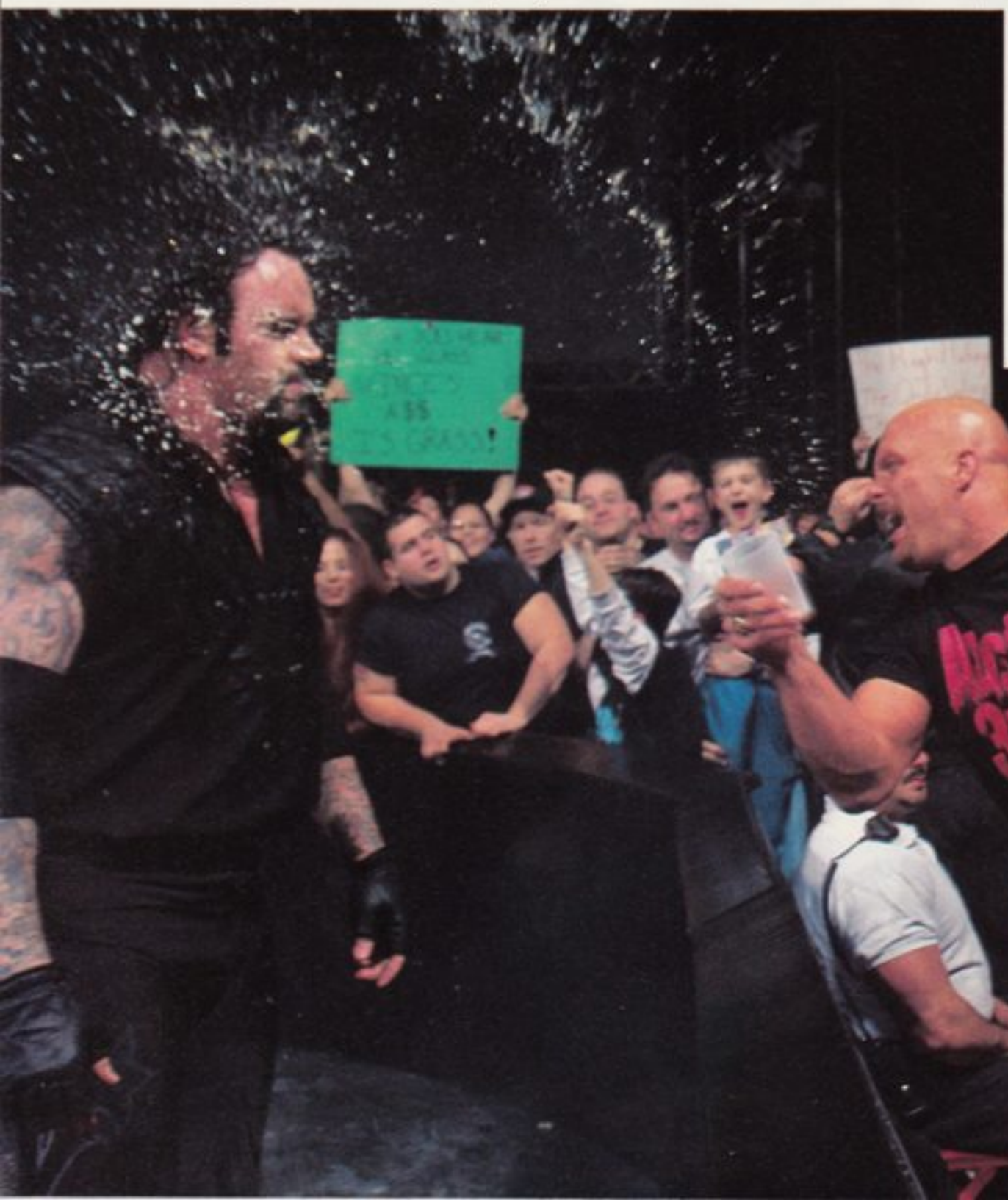
It may never be the same…
The view has changed.
Now the camera takes us where the viewer has never been before.
Not everyone can see it, however.
To enjoy the view, you have to open up your mind…



If you understand the first five lines of this story, then you get it. You understand what this crazy business called the World Wrestling Federation is all about. It's always been a hybrid of sports and entertainment, but now the focus is on entertainment more than ever before. The results of this experiment-turned-revolution are staggering. Ratings are through the roof. Superstars such as Stone Cold Steve Austin are household names and pop culture influences. Hell, we're even on the damn Super Bowl!

But there are the nay-sayers. The Chicken Littles are saying the sky has to be falling. Every upturn in business has historically been followed by an equally devastating downturn. What can prevent this from happening to the World Wrestling Federation? What is it that has Vince McMahon telling people this incredible period of good business is simply the launching pad for unprecedented new heights? One thing is the use of the camera as a window to the outside world. No longer will the camera be confined to the arena, with the rare venture viewed as an intrusion by the characters. The World Wrestling Federation is going Hollywood and there's no looking back.

Imagine two characters in a movie in an on-screen conflict. How stupid would it look if one of them said, "What's that camera doing there? Get the hell out of here!" Or "C'mon,



(Clockwise from left) Thanks to some Hollywood magic the arena is no longer a boundary for the Federation. The Austin/Undertaker battle was intensified by the trip to the morgue and Mark Henry added new dimension to his persona on his date with Chyna. From the antics of the Blue Blazer to Kane's inferno fans are left wondering how it's done!

Cameraman, follow me!" Ugh!... For decades, the camera was an intruder in wrestling. Now the World Wrestling Federation will use it as a window. To those who "get it," the possibilities are endless. Those who don't will be missing out on the fun.

Those people who don't are the same ones who say that Superman can't really fly. Right? Not necessarily. The ones who don't get it feel that rasslin' is sacred. Guess what? The wrestling business has been so exposed that my 8-year-old cousin knows what the real deal is. I believe Vince McMahon wants the fans to again ask, "How did they do that?" Thanks to some Hollywood magic, that is happening and it will continue to happen.

I believe that part of what initiated this ground-breaking concept is simply the question of how many stories can really be told in a wrestling arena. There are a finite number of matchups and related match stories. In my opinion, we have exhausted the supply. By taking the superstars and their conflicts out of the confines of the arena, we now have new stories to be retold in an arena down the line. Break the "rasslin'" mentality and the results are incredible.

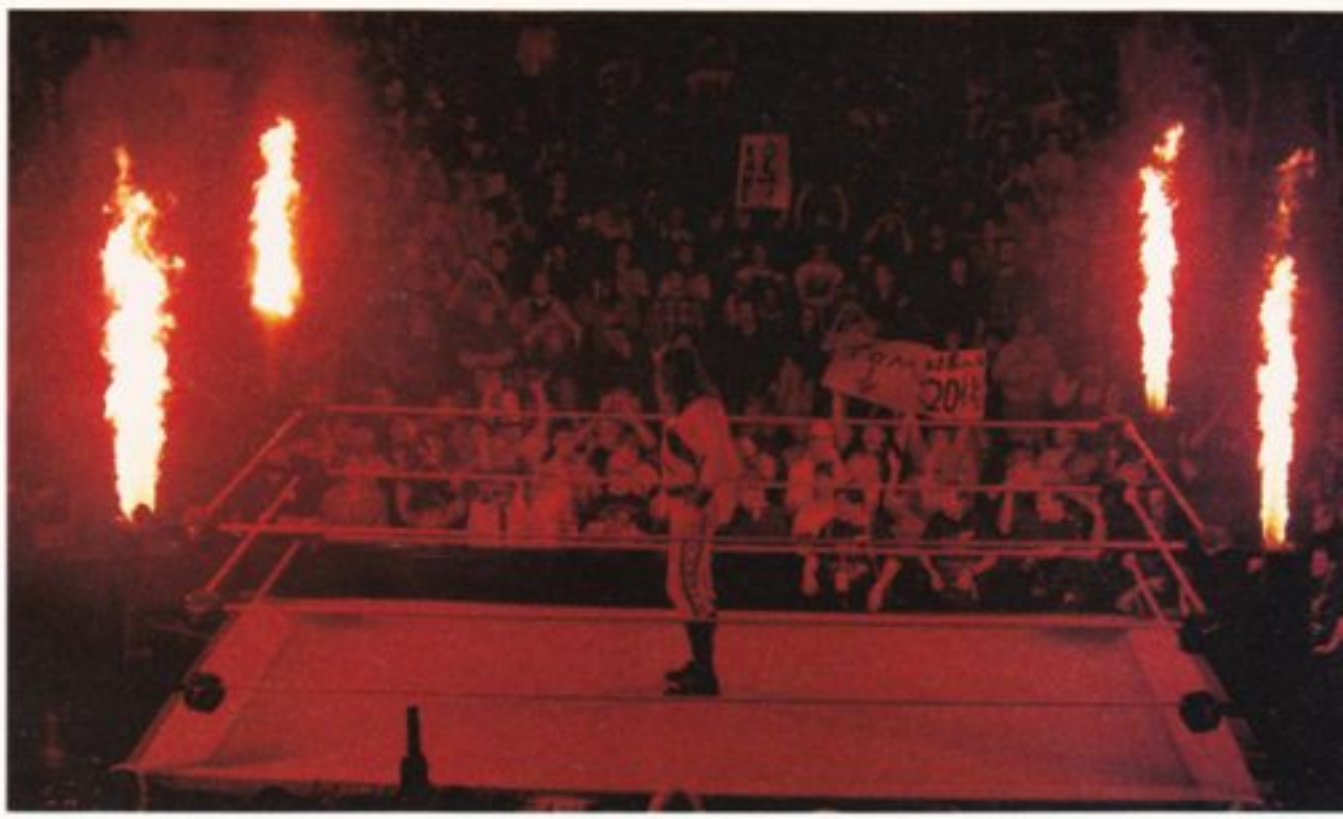
Tell me that the Austin/Undertaker feud wasn't intensified by the horrifying journey to the morgue as Stone Cold was nearly embalmed alive! The camera captured the story and the fans have hung on to every plot twist and confrontation since.

The World Wrestling Federation pioneered sports-entertainment and with the inclusion of Hollywood magic plans to revolutionize it again, with no competition.

Rasslin' companies will produce *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, while the World Wrestling Federation will produce *Star Wars*.

For those who don't get it, there's a match at a high school gym in front of 300 people with your name on it.

Ticket, please. The theater is going to be filling up fast tonight. It's another showing of the World Wrestling Federation...■



UNDRESS FOR SUCCESS

In the modern corporate world women are using every tool to climb the corporate ladder. It's all about beauty and brains—and how to use them to advantage. Persuasion can also be a valuable asset. And who better embodies such power than Debra McMichael? In this exclusive RAW Magazine pictorial, Debra shows us that the boardroom isn't for men only anymore...

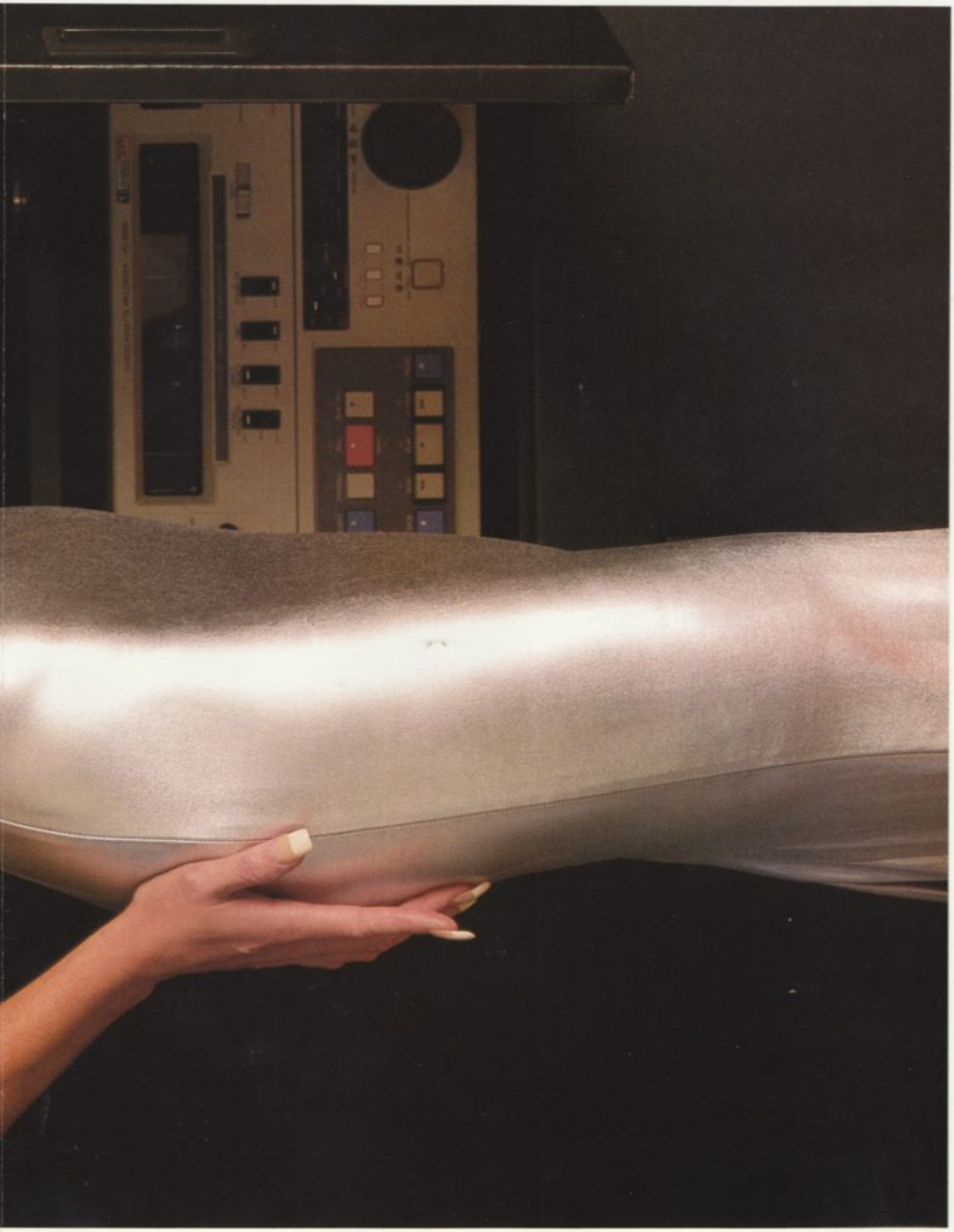
photographs by Rich Freeda

Sensual in red...or stunning in blue

A view from above...

Lace is a woman's best friend.

The Rookie's Magazine



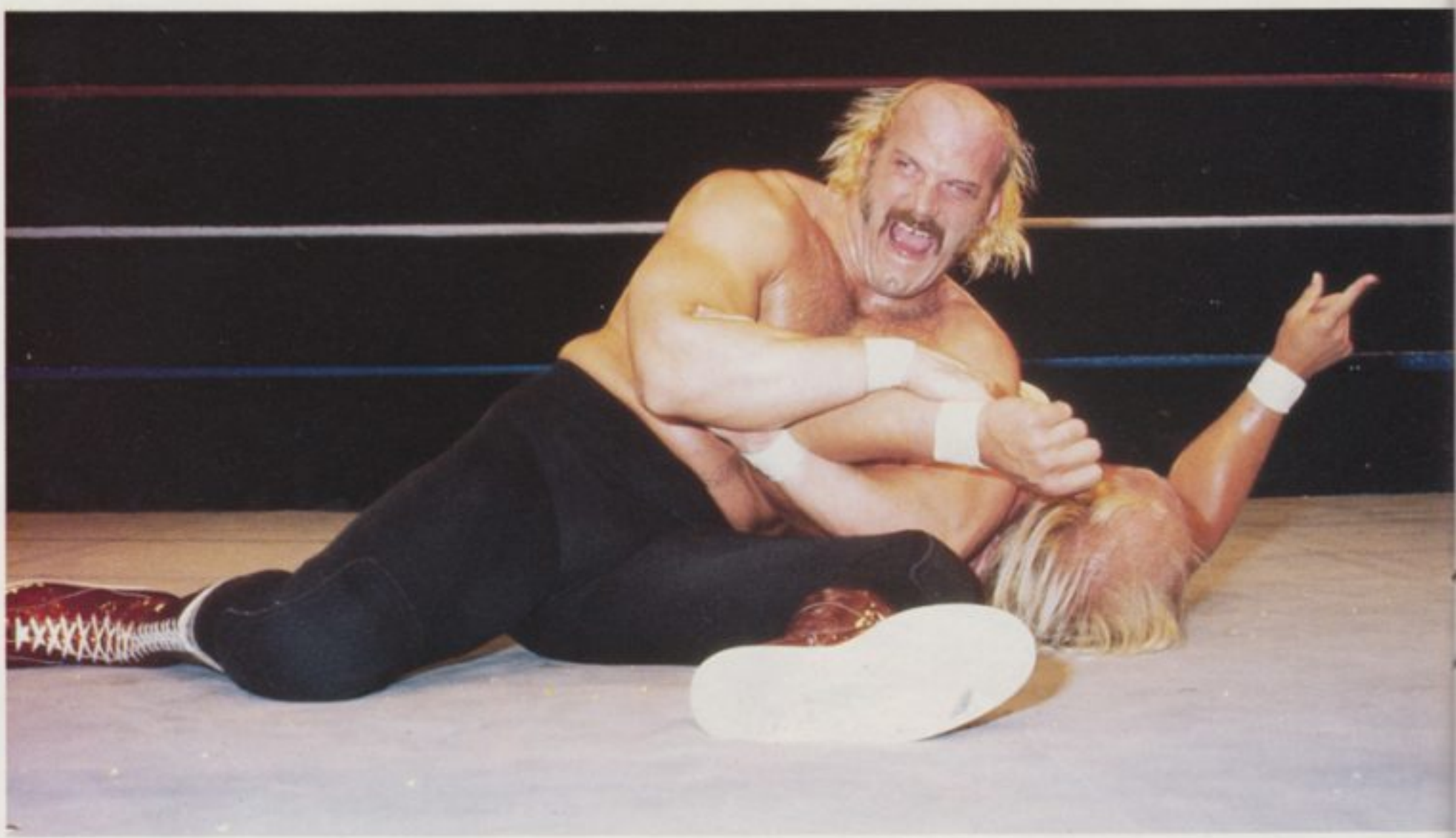
"It ain't cheating unless you get caught," Jesse "The Body" Ventura proclaimed, while calling the main event of *WrestleMania* V.

"Those are your rules, Jess," his co-announcer, Gorilla Monsoon, shot back..

"No," Jesse replied with authority, "Those are American rules, the American way."

I thought about that exchange this past November 3, when I flicked on the radio and discovered that Jesse had neutralized his two opponents to become the governor of Minnesota.

"THE GO



When Jesse retired from the ring to do color commentary in the 1980s, he often wore outlandish suits, feather boas and slit sunglasses.

JESSE "VERNOR" VENTURA

BY KEITH ELLIOT GREENBERG

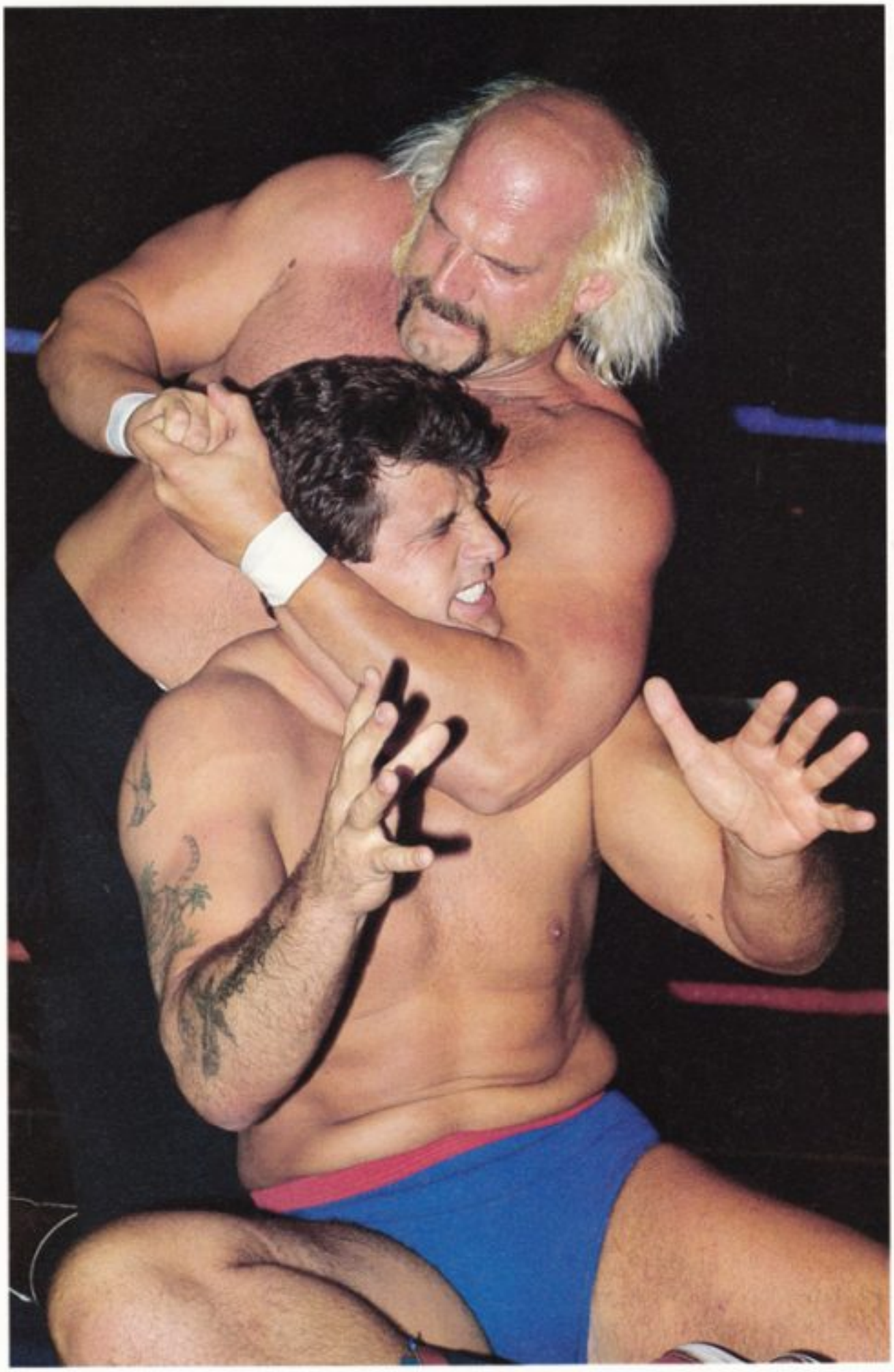
"WE SHOCKED THE WORLD!" Ventura announced to his voracious supporters. But I was less surprised than most. For several years I helped Ventura write "Body Language", his column in the *World Wrestling Federation Magazine*, and I knew that he deeply understood the rules of America and how to make them work for him.

During his wrestling heyday, Jesse "The Body" Ventura accumulated a substantial fan following because of his eccentric ways.

As a wrestler he teamed with the late Adrian Adonis, letting the gifted performer do the bulk of the grappling, while Jesse dazzled the crowd with his charisma. As an announcer on World Wrestling Federation broadcasts, Ventura did color commentary alongside Vince McMahon, titillating both the fans—and himself—by taunting the owner of the company on the air. When Jesse became a commentator for rival WCW and found himself at odds with the group's upper management, he accepted a deal where he stayed home but got paid anyway.

Even before the real James Janos, looking at a map of California, decided to launch his wrestling career with a name inspired by the city of Ventura, Jesse had developed the self-confidence he'd need later on as an elite Navy SEAL in Vietnam.

"I was a midwestern boy who wanted to stop Communism," he told me in 1985. "I learned guerrilla combat and did a lot of clandestine, behind-the-scenes stuff... I don't like to give too many details about that period of my life. What I did is between me and God."



(Above) Ventura achieved his superstar status in the Federation by battling such stars as Tony Garea. (Right) After Jesse retired from the ring for medical reasons, some say another Californian "acquired" his persona.

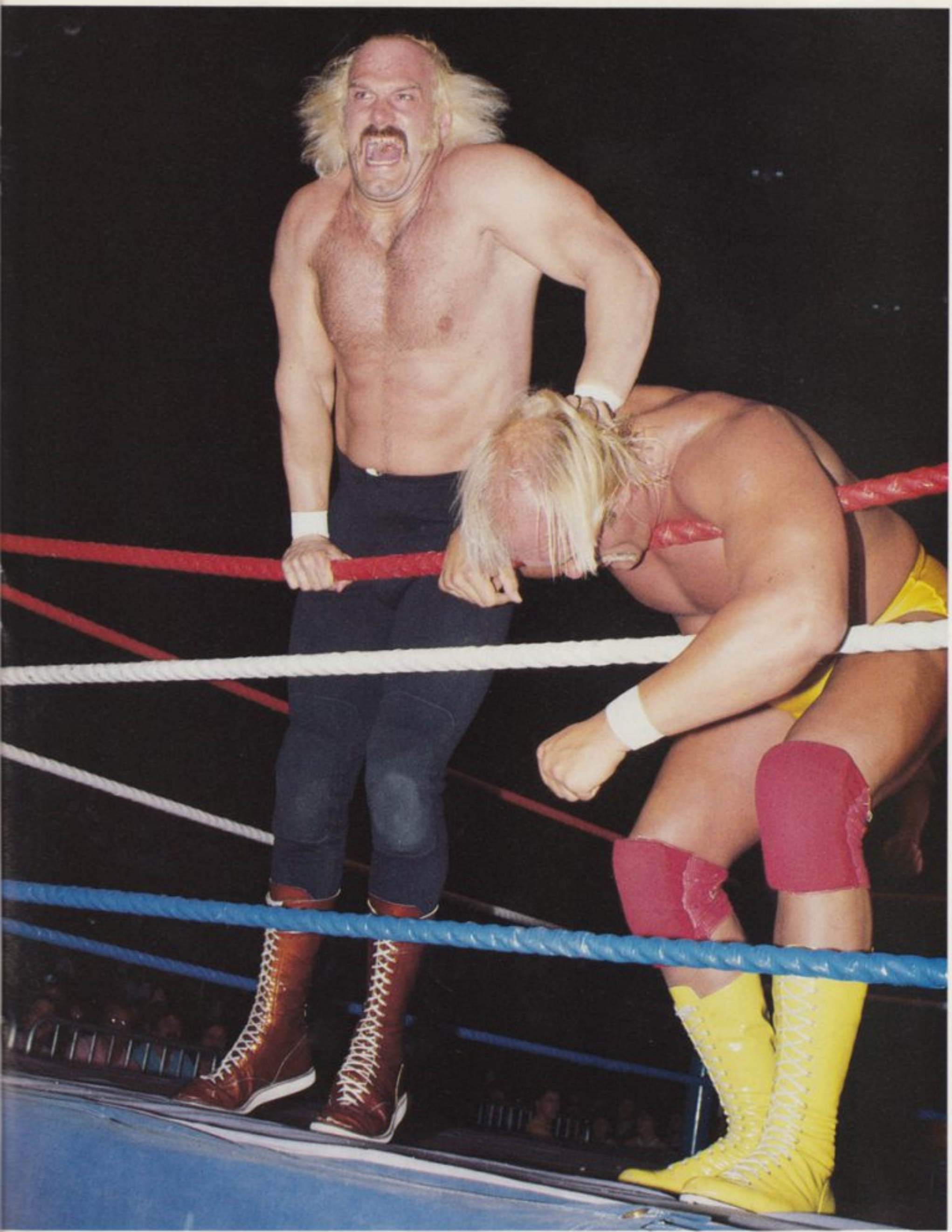
He made his wrestling debut in Wichita, Kansas, in 1975, earning a disqualification for tossing Omar Atlas over the top rope. With 21-inch biceps and a 51-inch chest—along with his penchant for feather boas, tie-dyed tights and slit sunglasses—Ventura was quite a presence in the old American Wrestling Association (AWA). He called the popular "High Fliers" tag team of Jim Brunzell and Greg Gagne "The High Criers" and renamed Minneapolis and St. Paul "Turkey Town I and II," respectively. Still, "The Body" gained a significant following, and he was asked to introduce the Rolling Stones at the St. Paul Civic Center in 1978. Jesse took the stage and riled the crowd with four simple words: "Good evening, Turkey Town!"

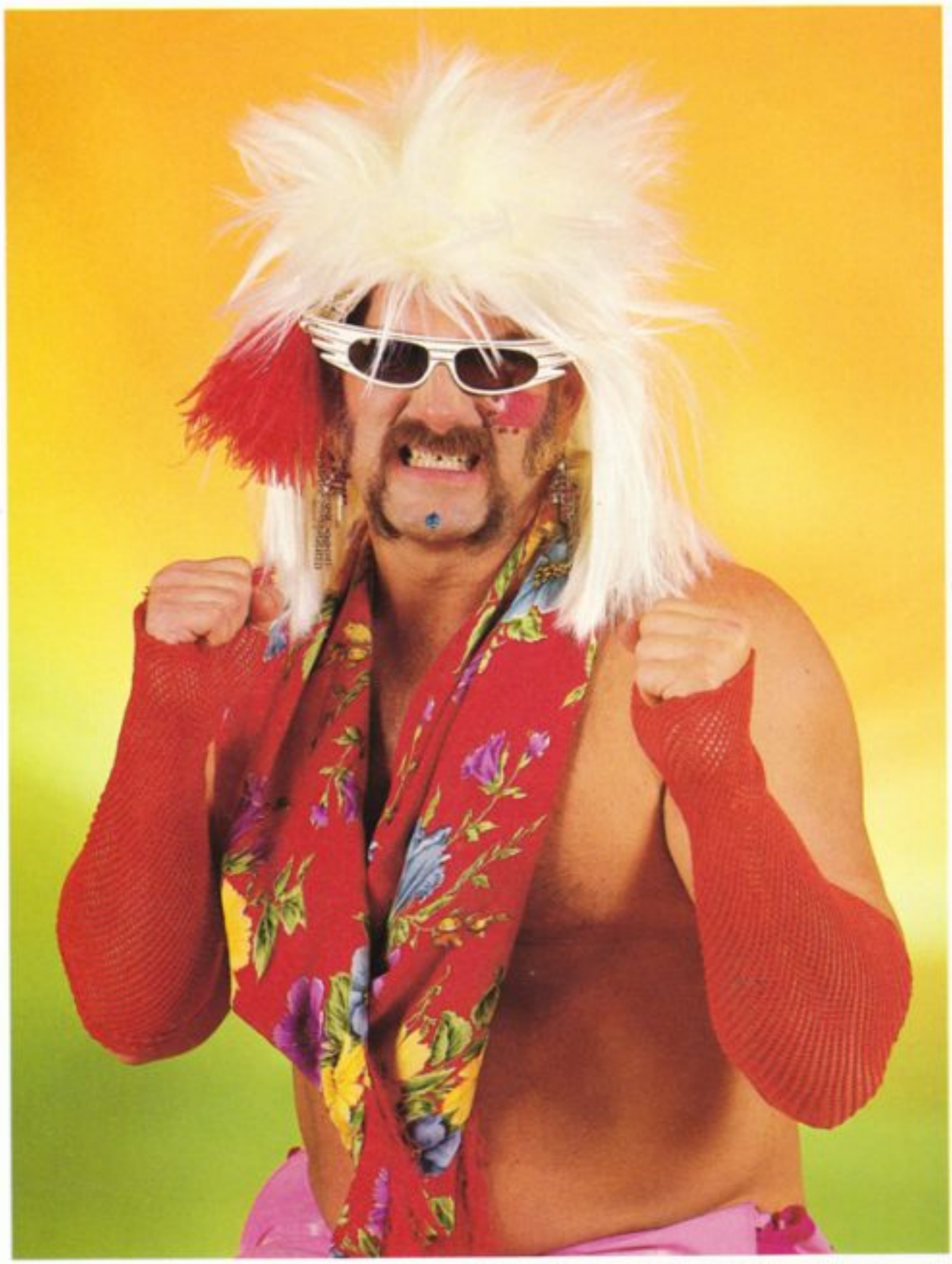
But it was in the World Wrestling Federation that Ventura achieved his greatest celebrity, challenging Bob Backlund for the championship and feuding with future Hall of Famer Ivan Putski in the early 1980s. When Hulk Hogan captured the title in 1984, Ventura was quickly touted as a top contender. After all, both he and Hogan were high-energy bodybuilders with just the right amount of flamboyance for the disco 80s. But when Jesse suddenly suffered a blood clot in his lung, he was out of commission. And the World Wrestling Federation, recognizing Ventura's strong verbal skills, put him on the air—both as a color commentator and host of an interview segment called "The Body Shop."

The timing couldn't have been better. The entertainment world was swept up in the "rock 'n' wrestling connection." Wrestlers appeared on MTV. Rock stars crowded ringside at New York City's Madison Square Garden. NBC was regularly broadcasting the World Wrestling Federation's *Saturday Night's Main Event*. Jesse now had a massive platform from which to disseminate his opinions on the sport of kings and life in general.

"Win if you can," he pontificated, "Lose if you must, but always cheat." When Gorilla Monsoon called the tag team of the Honky Tonk Man and Greg "The Hammer" Valentine "egomaniacs, in my book," Ventura responded, "Well, Gorilla, your book's pretty thin." Of the brawny Ultimate Warrior, Jesse ventured, "He has a million-dollar body... and a 10-cent brain."

When we'd work on his column, I'd occasionally get to see the real Jesse. Ventura told me that he privately respected the athletic skills of Tito Santana, even though he mercilessly teased the Mexican star on the air—calling him "Chico" and speculating





Some may find it hard to believe that the superstar who once was one of the most colorful men in the squared circle found his way the Minnesota governor's seat!

that he'd be better suited to selling tacos in Tijuana. He griped about the treatment of Vietnam veterans and predicted that... unlike so many others, who never knew when to say goodbye to the business... he'd have a vibrant future after wrestling.

He was working on that future throughout his tenure in the World Wrestling Federation, using the exposure to promote himself outside the squared circle. In 1987, he appeared in two action films with friend Arnold Schwarzenegger—*The Running Man* and *Predator*. In 1991, he was featured in *Ricochet* and *Abraxas, Guardian of the Universe*. In 1993, the year Jesse left the World Wrestling Federation, he was seen in *Demolition Man*, and would land subsequent roles in *Major League II* (1994) and *Batman & Robin* (1997). From 1989 to 1991, he was a color commentator for Minnesota Vikings' and Tampa Bay Buccaneers' games in the NFL. Recently, he had been a radio host on KFAN in Minneapolis.

But Ventura caused the greatest commotion as a politician, serving as mayor of suburban Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, from 1991 to 1995. He told interviewers that his wrestling background prepared him for this position, as politics and the mat wars were both dirty games. (He claimed politics was actually worse.) As he waged war with antagonistic members of the City Council, Jesse took credit for cutting crime and refusing to raise taxes.

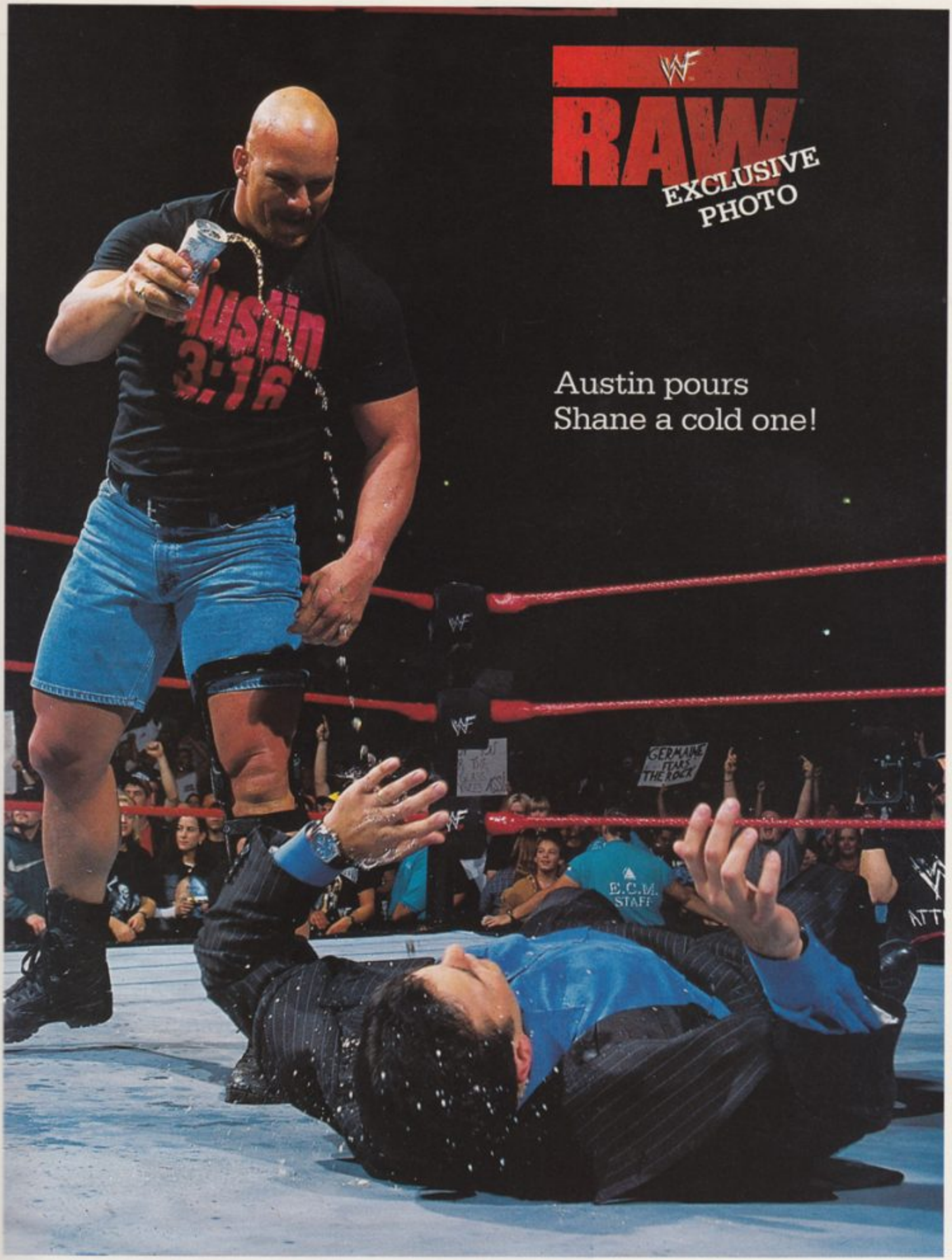
In his bid for governor, Ventura ran on the Reform Party, appealing to those fed up with both Democrats and Republicans. Campaigning in jeans and a Minnesota Timberwolves' jacket and on at least one occasion in camouflage, Ventura played his opponents—Democrat Hubert Humphrey III and Republican Norm Coleman—the way he played Vince McMahon on *Saturday Night's Main Event*, treating them like buttoned-up straight men worthy of mockery.

As a former wrestler, Ventura knew how to get an emotional response from the public. His campaign song was a spoof of the *Theme from Shaft*. He posed in gym shorts as the subject of Auguste Rodin's sculpture of "The Thinker" and shot a commercial of himself as an action figure. All the while he pushed issues many deem controversial—gay marriages, less strict gun laws and the possibility of legalized prostitution.

He relished his outsider role, and the fact that he was drawing people who'd never felt motivated to vote before to the polls. In his victory speech, he boasted, "Let them say, 'A vote for Jesse is a wasted vote.' I'll say, 'We wasted them with wasted votes.'"

As I listened, I could hear the Jesse Ventura of the mid-1980s offering his commentary to his co-host on *World Wrestling Federation Superstars of Wrestling*: "I'm impressed, Vince McMahon, and I don't impress easy." ■

Editor's Note: Keith Elliot Greenberg is the author of a forthcoming A&E biography on Jesse Ventura to be published by Lerner Publications this September.



Austin pours Shane a cold one!

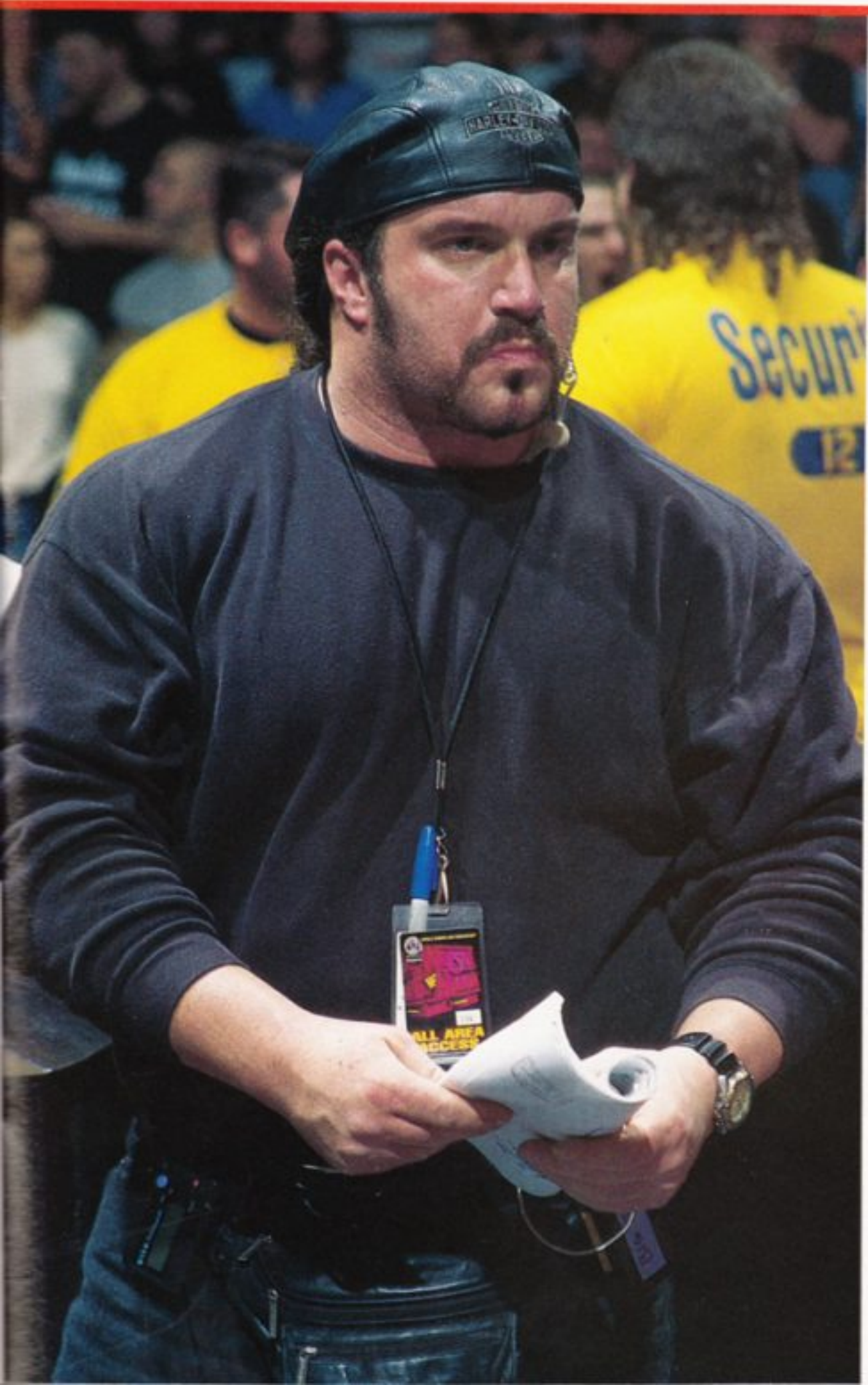
The Secret Service of the Federation...

To Silently Protect.

Possibly one of the strongest men working for the World Wrestling Federation is somebody the fans are never supposed to see. Covered in muscles, shrouded in long hair and tattoos, the man responsible for coordinating the safety of everybody at a World Wrestling Federation event is out of sight, but impossible to miss.

By Kevin Kelly

His name is Jim Dotson. At first glance this veritable bull of a man looks like trouble, instead of the one who prevents it. I got the idea for this article by seeing him in action. Following a *RAW* taping, I was leaving the building at the same time as Mr. McMahon and his associates. Jim stopped a wall of people and parted them like Moses did that famous body of water. No incidents would befall the Chairman of the Board on this night. The Chairman of "Protective Services" was on the case.

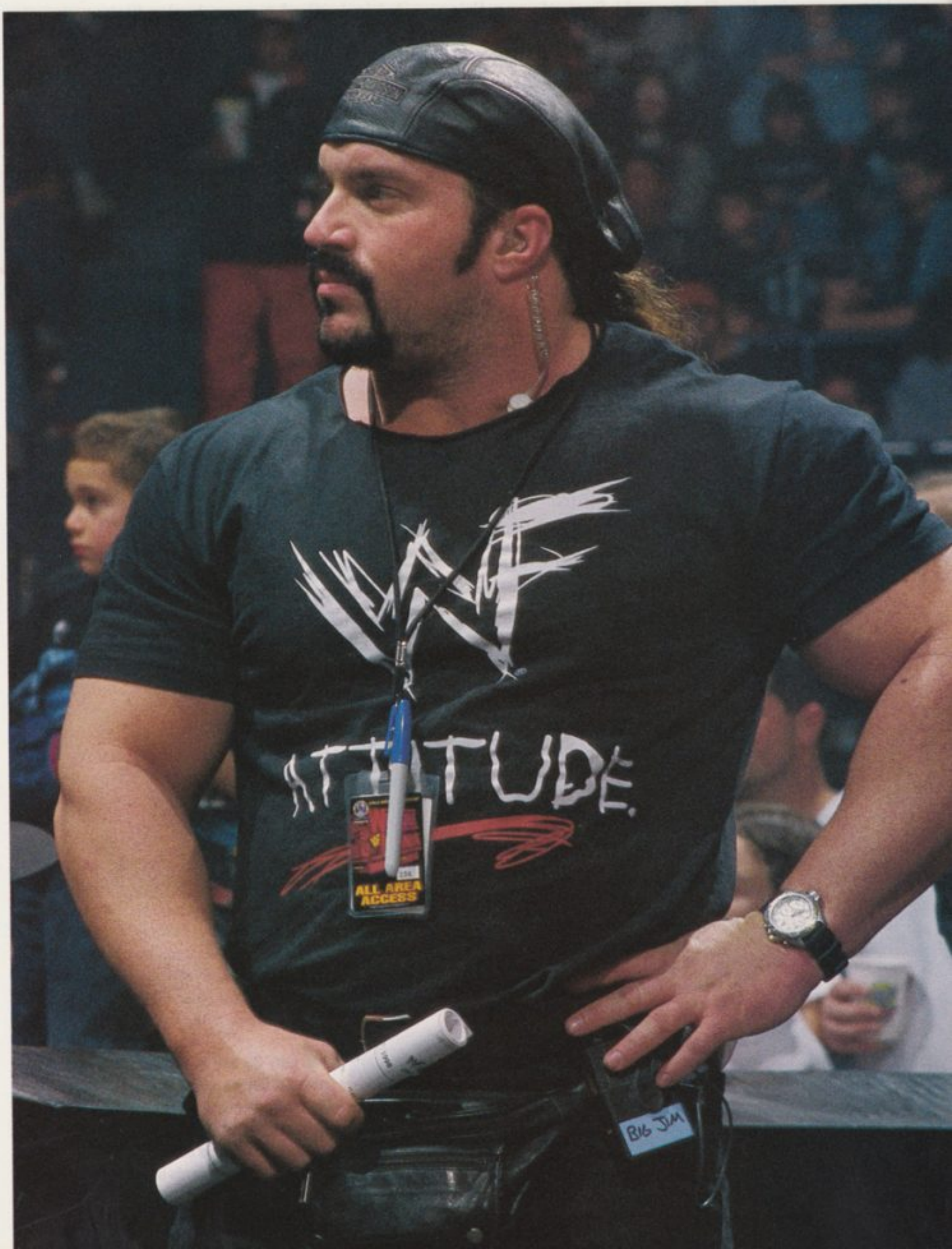


A HUGE RIGHT FOREARM extends a massive hand. Thankfully, Jim Dotson is offering it to me as a greeting, not a warning. Soft-spoken, humble, but infinitely confident, Dotson described a Federation event as a combination of "a rock concert, New Year's Eve and Halloween." His meeting with me is midway through a 16-hour day for the Federation's head of protective services. His is one of the many jobs that are less than glamorous, but necessary for a live event to take place.

Earlier in the morning, Dotson arrived and met with the head of the building. It was a brand-new facility on the campus of Ohio State University, and there were still an army of construction people putting the finishing touches on the beautiful home of the Buckeyes and the World Wrestling Federation on this night. All that work would have to stop and those doing the work would need to leave by a set time. It was up to Dotson to ensure that the building's manager carried out his game plan. Nothing is left to chance. According to Dotson, everybody's safety is at stake.

From there, his eyes and ears are wide open as the Federation Superstars begin to arrive. After making certain that the building follows his directions

(Far left) On any Federation programming Jim Dotson can be spotted keeping the crowd in check. (Left) As imposing as most World Wresting Federation Superstars Dotson is always on the lookout for potential hazards in the arenas.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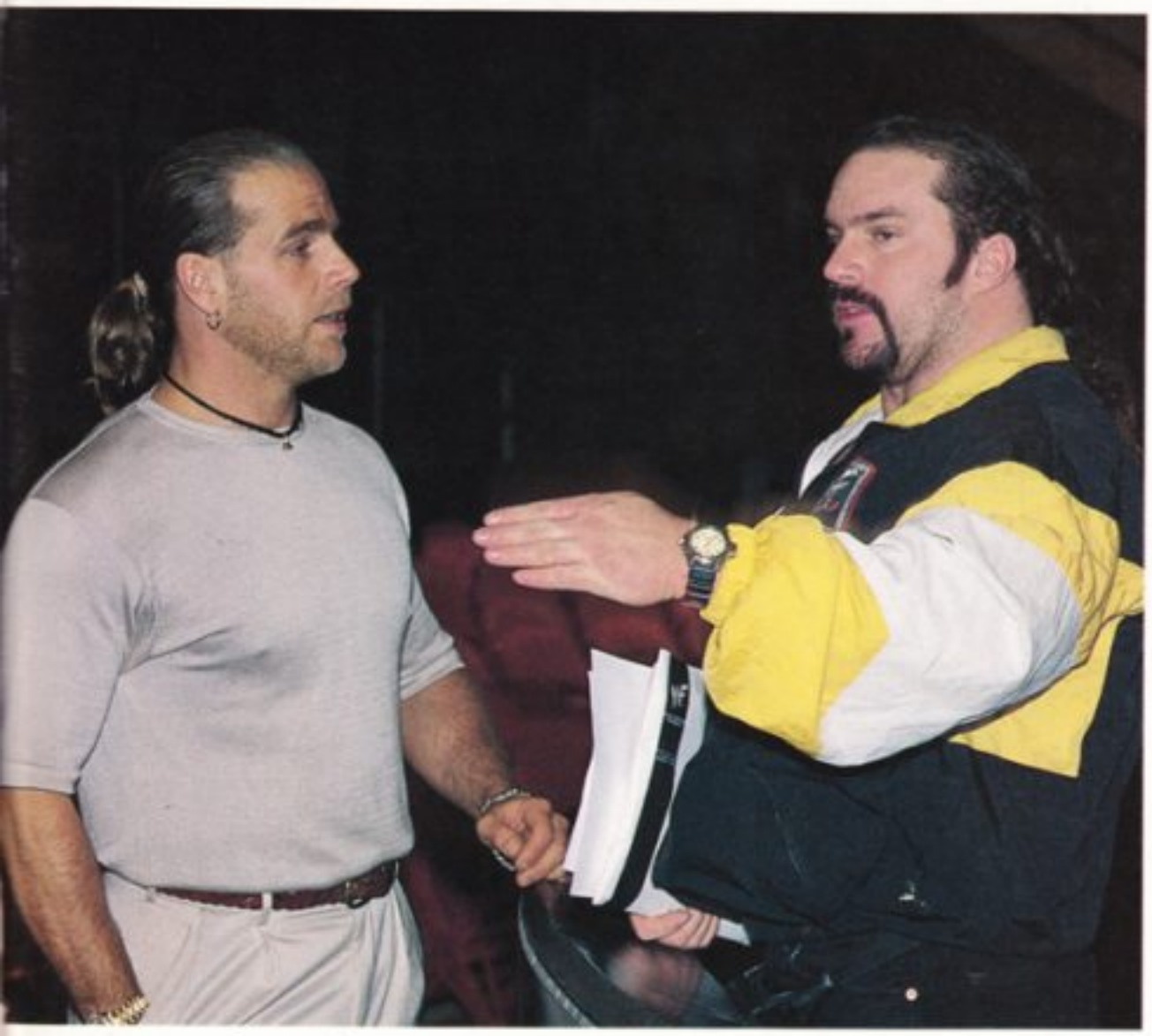

(Far left) As far as he's concerned, Dotson has no interest in "tangling with the tigers" of the Federation. (Left) Jim says he remains neutral with regard to personal issues of the superstars.

on crowd-control issues, Dotson focuses his attention on the stars of the show. The graduate of Middle Tennessee State University and former football player for the Moccasins looks like one of the men he's hired to protect.

"So," I asked, "If you are responsible for 'protection,' then why don't you get into the ring and break apart disputes involving Federation Superstars?"

Dotson replied, "It's interesting that you ask me that because I cannot allow myself to become personally involved due to the fact that I have an entire arena to be concerned about. [The Federation Superstars'] issues are not my issues. I have to be very fair in what I do. Therefore, I stay very neutral with the personal issues."

That neutrality comes into play when he has to provide protective services for Vince McMahon in New York City's Times Square as well as for Stone Cold Steve Austin at the Billboard Music Awards. He can't afford to get involved. This reminds me of the Secret Service. Rarely seen, but always there. Dotson agreed, but he was quick to downplay his role.

Dotson said he now handles about 90 percent of his confrontations verbally. Occasionally a fan might get out of control and jump over the railing, for example. It's Dotson's job to restrain the fan until the police can take over. With a blend of disarming charm and a study of martial arts–based joint manipulation he handles adversity with minimal impact on the offender. But it hasn't always been that way for the man who has spent 14 years in the field.

"During the early days, I did have a bit of an 'ego problem'," Dotson explained. "I think that everyone [in this field] does, but you grow out of it and I don't have an ego problem now. Being six feet and over 260 pounds, there are times where I am challenged... verbally. If someone wants to call me something, I know they don't know me personally. But when I was working my way through school... at some events that were in a hostile environment, there was a time when I tried to satisfy my ego. But when you've been doing this as long as I have, you grow out of it."

It would be easy to mistake Dotson for a Federation Superstar. He gets asked for his autograph quite often. Fans run up to him and ask who he is. He proudly says, "I'm Jim Dotson, Protective Services."

For a man who had an ego which got him into trouble when he was younger, he states that he is proud of who he is and what he has done for the last 14 years. He was a high school football star, played at MTSU and earned his degree while working and playing ball. He does have a lot to be proud of.

But would there ever be a day when the man providing the protection would want to emerge from the shadows and become one of the superstars he is paid to protect? He has the look, the athletic background...

Quickly he cut me off, "Never. That is a different breed of cat and I have no interest in tangling with one of those tigers!"

I asked the question again, but in a hypothetical fashion. "What would happen if you tangled with one of those tigers, hypothetically?"

Dotson paused... and responded, "Hypothetically?... They'll be provided with protective services..."

Interview over. Time for the show. I can't help but wonder if that "ego problem" is completely gone. I wonder if the adoring fans of Steve Austin or DX make Dotson yearn for the days when he was the star on the gridiron.

They say that once you get a taste of stardom you never forget what it's like...

In the meantime, I feel very safe with Jim Dotson, Protective Services, in control. ■

"Until you've walked a mile in my hat...
you only know half the story."
—Jim Ross

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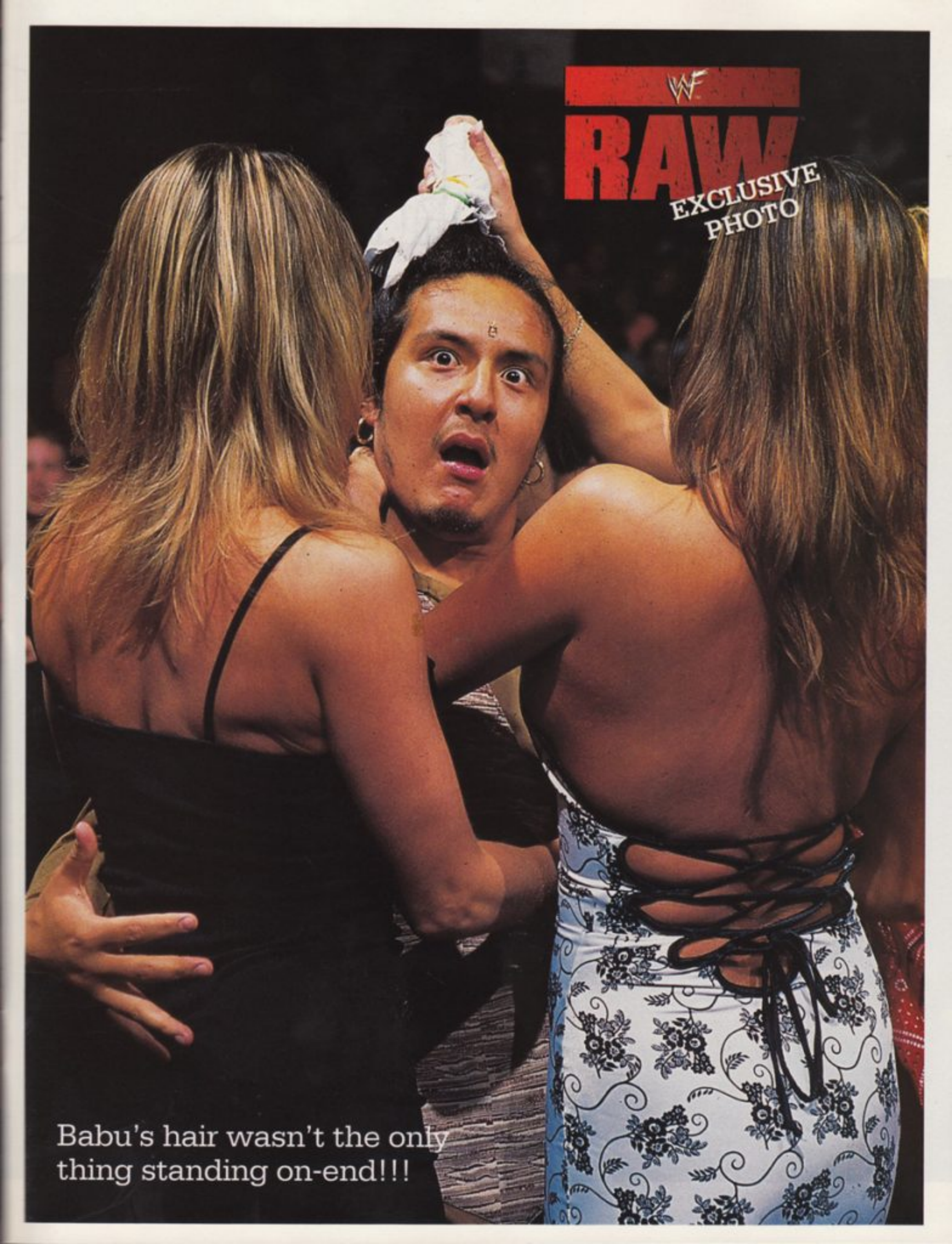


Babu's hair wasn't the only thing standing on-end!!!

Resurrect

tion What carnage has been unleashed?

by Bill Banks

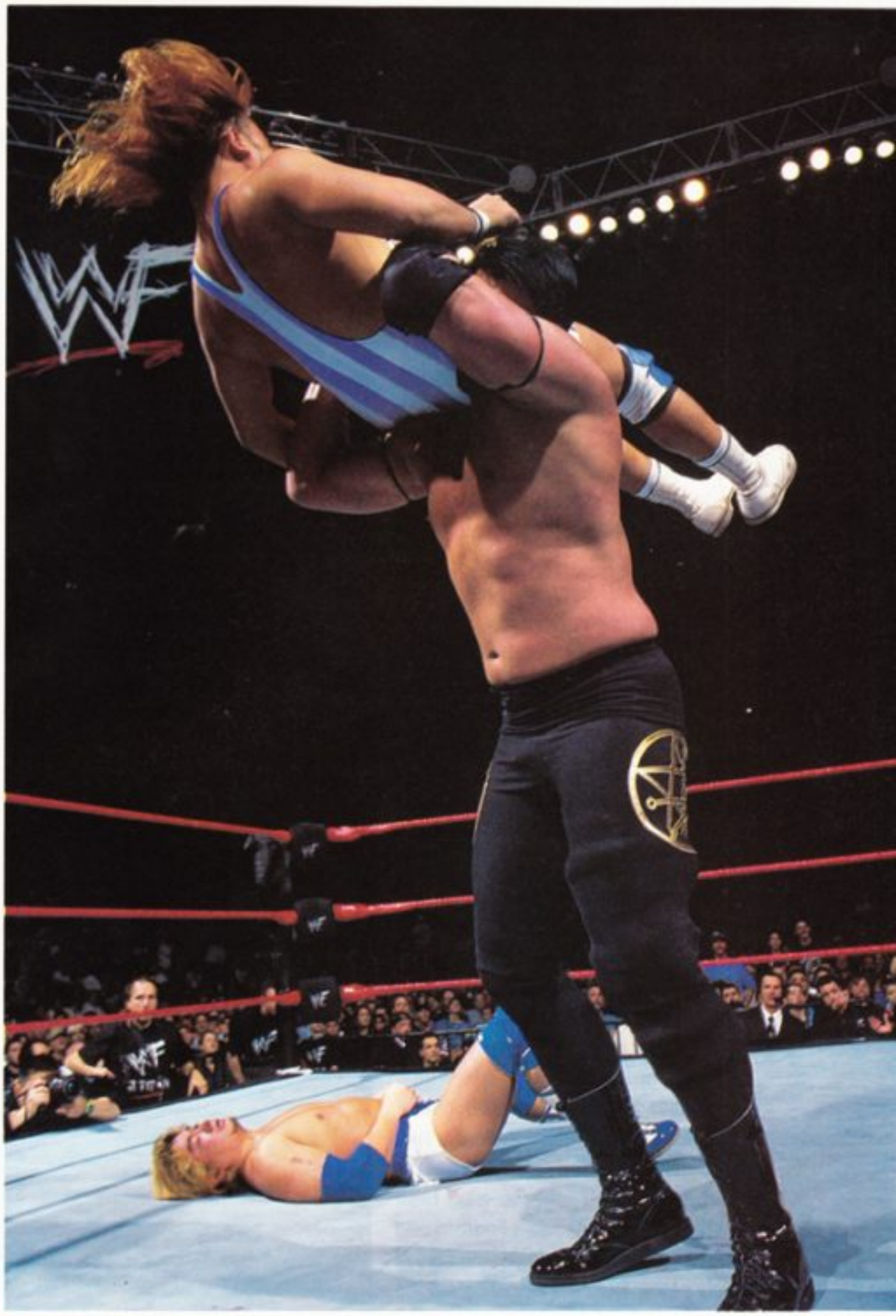
What if you could have it all?

Women, money, power, a clean slate, a chance to do it all over again. What price would you pay?

Since their formation in the World Wrestling Federation, the Acolytes have become two unstoppable machines. Devoid of compassion, they attack whatever stands in their way—and terminate it with extreme prejudice. In sports, coaches achieve such a mindset by molding athletes with discipline and guidance. The Acolytes draw their power from something else—something we haven't yet put a finger on. Whatever it is, they've become a pair of great white sharks, unleashed into the waters of the World Wrestling Federation like two killing machines. In the movie *Jaws*, Quint (played by Robert Shaw) put it best:

"A great white... has those lifeless eyes. Black like a doll's eyes. And then he bites you, and those black eyes roll over and the sea turns red. And no matter how much you pound on him, no matter how much you scream, it doesn't stop him from tearing you to pieces."

Heartless and soul-less, the two best words to describe what Faarooq and Bradshaw have become. Gone are the days of pride and barroom brawling.

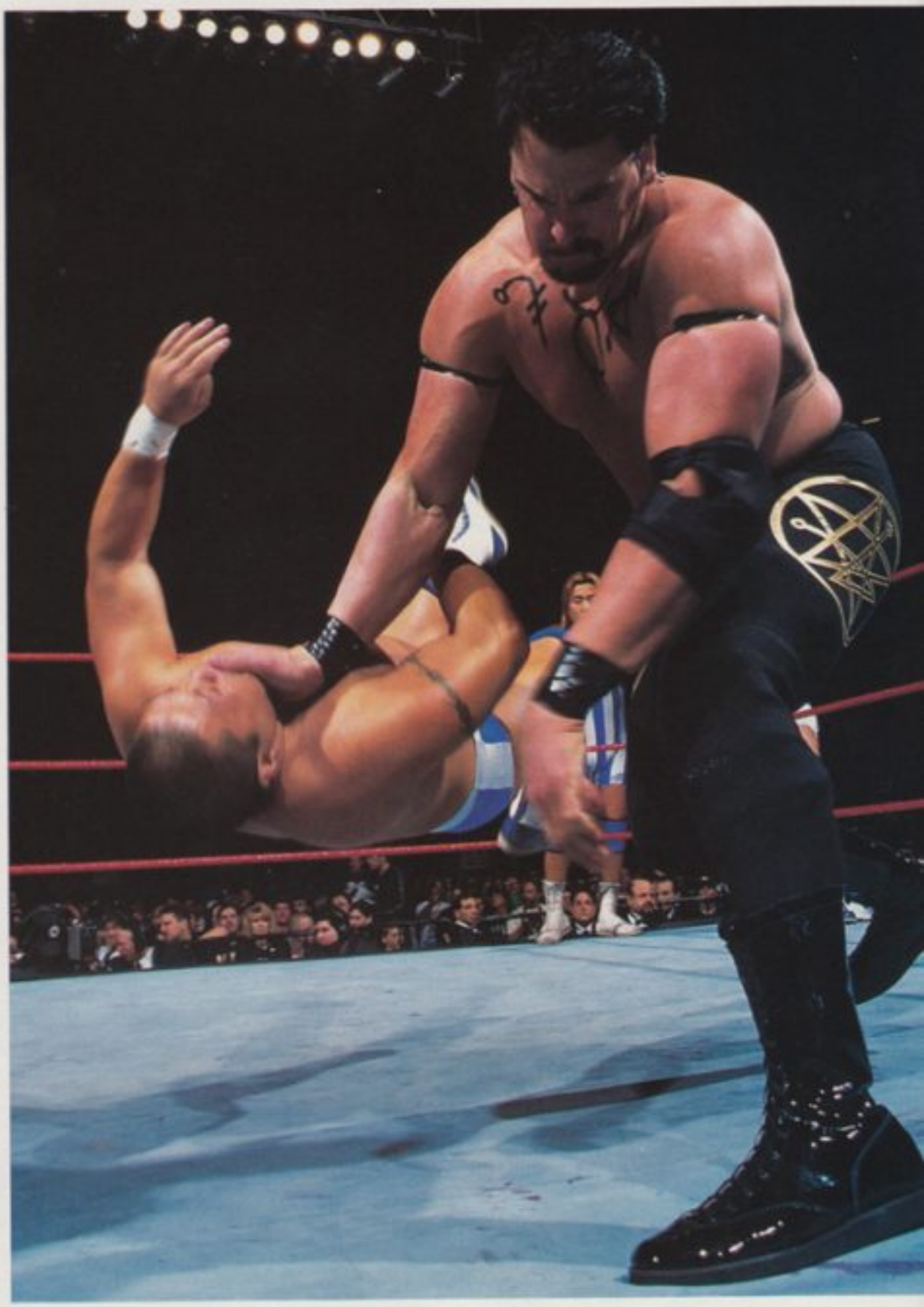


Bradshaw and Faarooq—pummeling Paul Ellering (left)—have become two heartless machines. (Right) Without provocation, the Acolytes attack their adversaries with extreme prejudice.

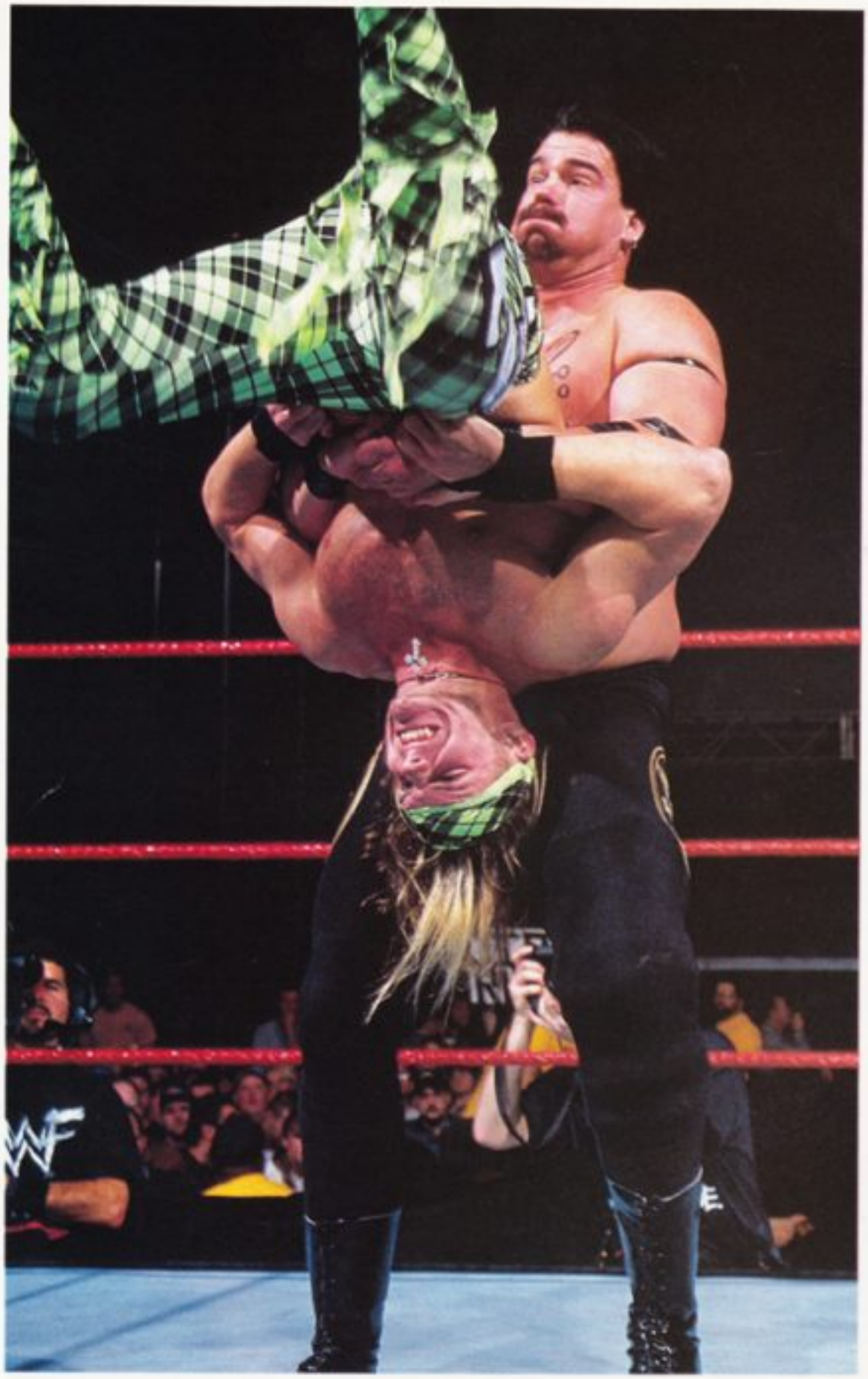
In its place, the symbols from the book of *Necromicon*—better known as *The Book Of The Dead*. Like two lost souls who found direction, the careers of the Acolytes were resurrected.

Before finding this common power, Faarooq's prospects were measured by days and months. Time was the only thing holding him back. It seemed so long ago that Ron Simmons was the pride of Bobby Bowden's Florida State football program. A raw and aggressive talent, the superstar entered the sport and became the first black World's Heavyweight Champion. When he made it to the Federation, he created the Nation of Domination—a faction so fearful that it nearly catapulted him to the grandest prize in sports-entertainment. Then some said his career plateaued. In a Federation filled with young and energetic talent, Faarooq might have looked at them and seen... himself. What he was, what he wished he had back. With nothing to lose, he gave himself to an unholy power. Now it's like 1986 again. He is in the best shape of his career, and time seems to be going backwards. How can it be?

Bradshaw has been transformed as well, but in a much different way. Time was the one thing the Texan had plenty of, but he was so hell-bent on brawling that he never got anything out of it but a reputation. The days of cowboys on the range are past. In an era of technological evolution, Bradshaw stood alone brandishing a bullrope in one hand and the sign of the Longhorns with the other. A bull only knows how to do one thing, and that's fight. Bradshaw was so bull-headed that he could have spent the rest of his career doing just that. And what would it have gotten him? Now, gone is everything even



(Clockwise) The Acolytes have relentlessly assaulted both the Hardy Boyz and Kaientai recently. Based on the symbols on their chests and their wrestling attire, it appears Faarooq and Bradshaw may be drawing some sort of unholy power from the *Necromicon*.



associated with his Texas heritage. A belief in the *Necromicon* has somehow erased what Bradshaw held so dear—and replaced it with a new philosophy. How do you make a man forget the past he had hung onto so vigorously for so long?

In some religious cults, prospective members are brainwashed until they accept certain beliefs. You're so convinced of the leader's powers that you live—and die—on his command. Your "past life" is forgotten—including memories, family and friends. After such an experience, some say they emerged from their "old shell" to become a new and evolved human being. Sound familiar? Might Faarooq and Bradshaw have done the same, only voluntarily? The term *acolyte* is defined as an "inferior officer in the church, or follower" whose duty is to assist and attend the priest. Follow the leader, and you'll shine in the light of his divinity. Judging by the symbols on Bradshaw's and Faarooq's chests, their interpretation appears to be opposed to Christianity. Rather, they are all found in the *Necromicon*.

For example, one of the drawings of Bradshaw's is the symbol for the god of death. On the Acolytes' trunks, two emblems resembling pentagrams overlap each other. Has the *Book of the Dead* shown Bradshaw and Faarooq the light at the end of darkness? In the *Necromicon*, there are chapters on how to resurrect the dead. Perhaps they have found a way to achieve that feat with the careers of the living. If they can do this, what else do the Acolytes have to offer? Unlimited wealth? Power beyond the wildest dreams?

Inside the squared circle, the Acolytes annihilate opponents with the ferocity of two caged animals. They show no emotion and are completely silent in their destruction. No matter how hard their foes try to fight back, Bradshaw and Faarooq continue to tear them apart. And after the screaming stops, the last thing the fallen will see is the Acolytes' lifeless black eyes... ■

BY BILL BANKS

Yo, do you Remember...

The Machines?

In the 1980s, Japan was a growing industrial power in the economic world. Businessmen from the Pacific rim country turned their attention to the United States, buying up companies and turning out some of the world's best automotive products. Their machines rivaled anything manufactured in the West.

In August 1986, two Japanese machines were exported to America—and the World Wrestling Federation in particular—and dubbed the "Giant" Machine and "Super" Machine. The two masked superstars were enormous, and one of them bore an uncanny resemblance to late Hall of Famer Andre the Giant. They attacked the tag team ranks with reckless abandon and engaged in a bitter feud with Bobby Heenan's proteges, Big John Studd and King Kong Bundy.

In actuality, the Machines were Andre and "Masked Superstar" Bill Eadie—later known as Ax of Demolition. Their nicknames hinted at their true identities—the "Giant"

Upon entering the Federation in August 1986, the Machines engaged in a bitter feud with Bobby Heenan and his proteges, King Kong Bundy (left) and Big John Studd (above).

Machine for Andre and the "Super" Machine for Eadie.

In the summer of 1986, then–Federation president Jack Tunney suspended Andre for failing to appear for a match against Studd and Bundy. Heenan was elated, thinking that he had finally rid the ranks of the Frenchman. At the time the Federation had a working agreement with the New Japan promotion, and during his suspension Andre traveled to the Far East to compete there.

The characterization of the Machines was first initiated in New Japan, as Andre joined Eadie under masks with another Japanese competitor known as the "Strong" Machine to form a destructive trio. Their run in the promotion was short-lived, however, as the Giant and his partner journeyed back to the Federation with vengeance on their minds.

Prior to entering the competitive ranks, former Federation commentator Gene Okerlund introduced the Machines to fans via interviews in Tokyo. When Okerlund questioned the "Giant" Machine about whether he was in fact Andre, the superstar denied the accusation, which infuriated Heenan. "He's no more Japanese than I am," the manager barked in various interviews. Ironically, the "Super" Machine subsequently did most of the talking for the tandem to hide Andre's thick accent. Supplying a forged background to back up their claims, the Machines said they were products of Tokyo University, and individually hailed from Sapporo and a little known island territory of Fu Yu Tu, Japan.

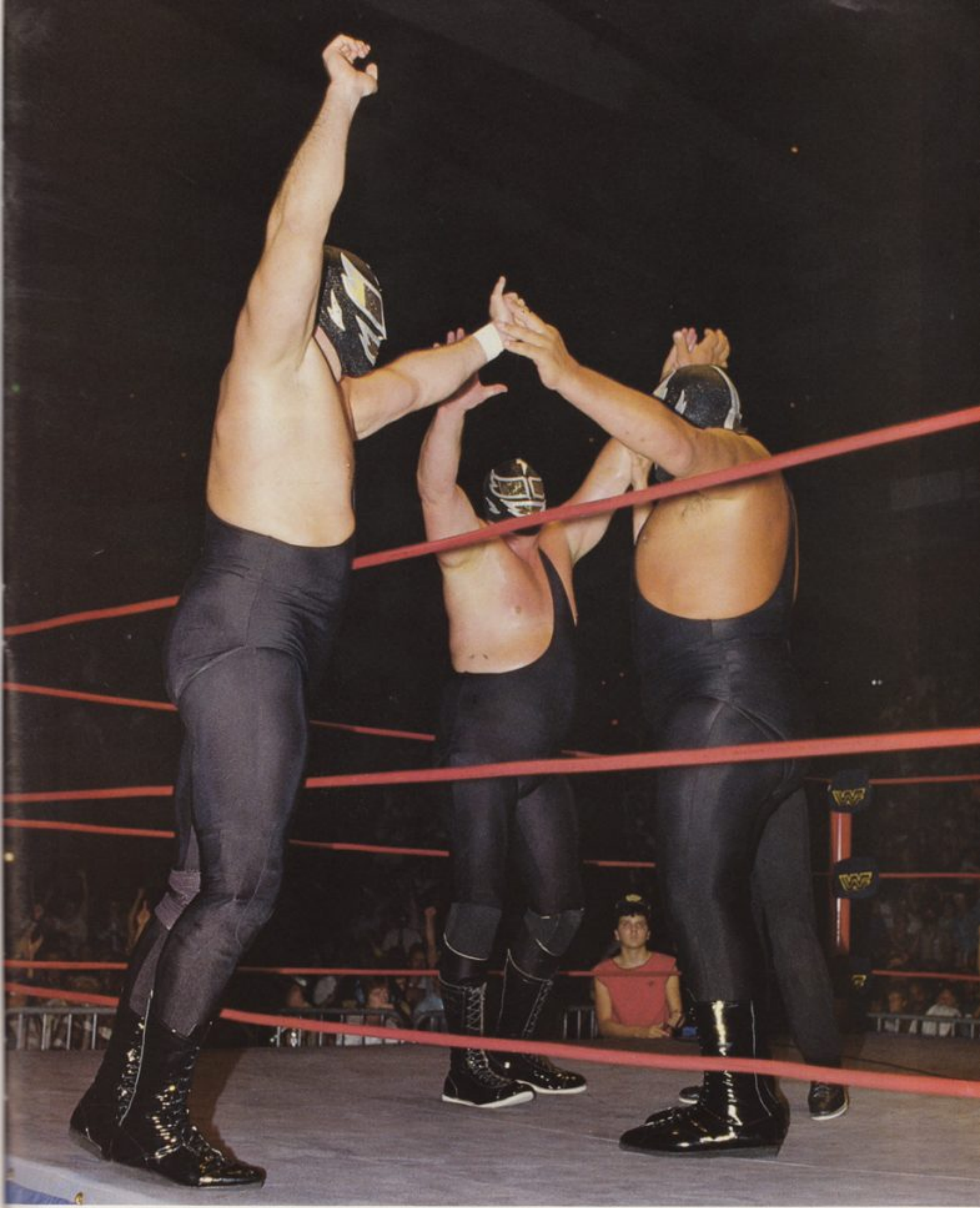
Despite Heenan's objections, Tunney could do nothing to stop the Machines from competing in the World Wrestling

Federation ranks. Unless it could be proven that Andre and Eadie were under the silver and black masks, the president could take no action. The Machines and their manager, Captain Lou Albano (who was ironically Andre's former manager), quickly took aim at Bundy and Studd, challenging them to a series of matches across the United States. Later the "Big" Machine—who was actually Jack Mulligan, former member of the Federation Tag Team titlists the Blackjacks—would join the fold. In some instances, Heenan attempted to mock the Machines by having Bundy and Studd appear wearing paper bags over their heads. It was no use. Andre, Eadie and Mulligan, in disguise, battered and bruised their opponents in spite of Bundy and Studd's attempts to unmask the Giant Machine at every opportunity.

Within a few months, the Machines had become a favorite tandem among Federation fans. Their popularity sparked T-shirts and posters, all aimed at infuriating Heenan and his troops. Soon, other superstars jumped on the Machine bandwagon hoping to cash in on the trend. The "Hulk" Machine made several appearances with the originals, along with the "Rowdy" Machine. Andre, Eadie and Mulligan had proven their point to Heenan and after the Hall of Famer's suspension expired, the trio cast aside their masks. Andre would go on to challenge Hulk Hogan for the World Wrestling Federation Championship at *WrestleMania* III—eventually winning the gold in 1988. Eadie formed the championship duo of Demolition with "Smash" Barry Darsow, and Mulligan later bowed out of the spotlight.

Japan may have exported the destructive Machines to the United States, but Andre and Eadie proved that nothing could top the original American-made models! ■

(Above) Despite their efforts to unmask the "Giant" Machine, Studd and Bundy could never topple the supposed Japanese imports. (Right) The Machines, Andre, Eadie and Mulligan, eventually went their separate ways.



THE NIGHT THE BELT CHANGED HANDS

Champion Sycho Sid vs. Challenger the Undertaker

WrestleMania 13, March 23, 1996, Chicago, Illinois

BY LUCAS

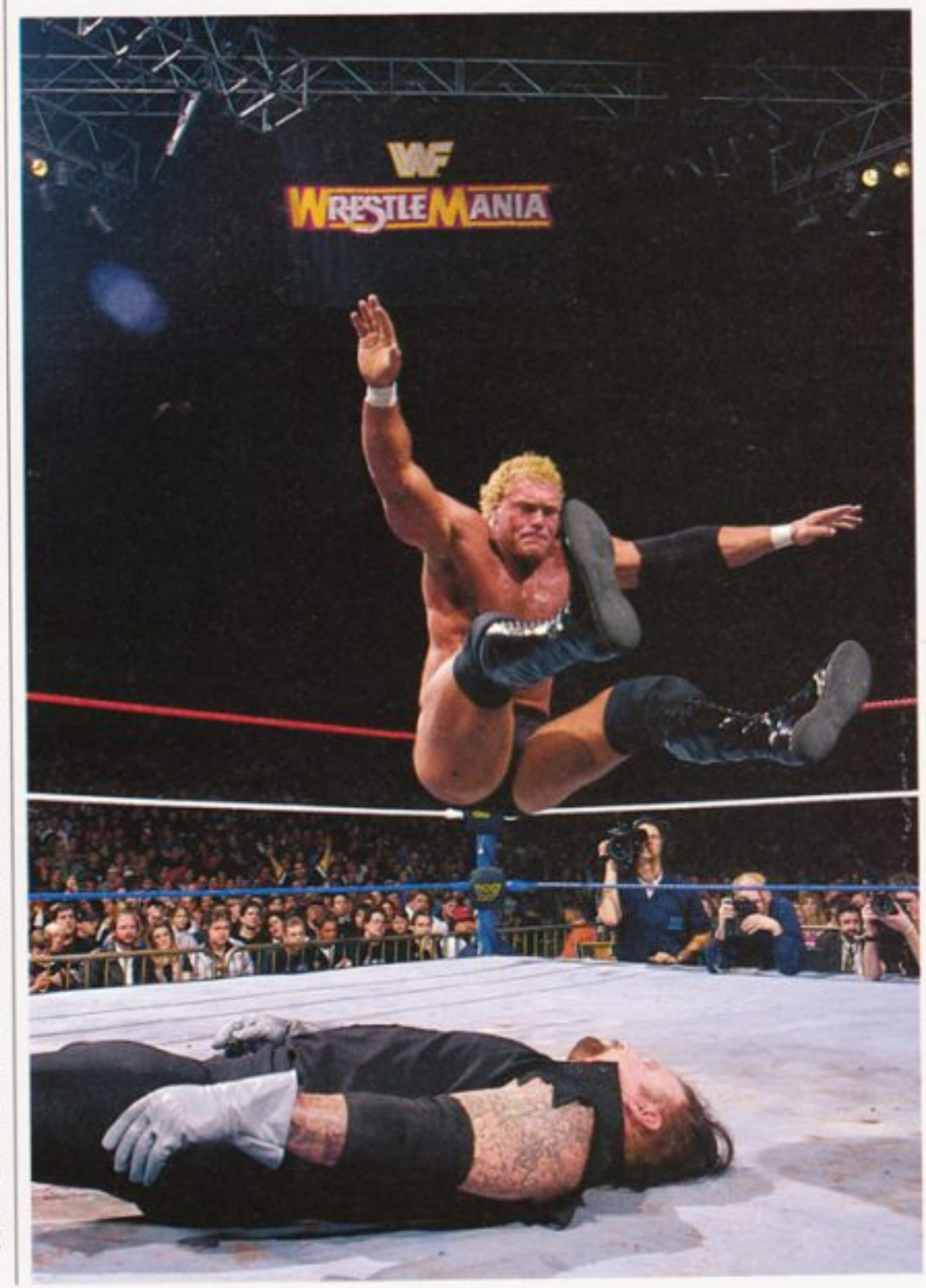
Although recognized as the Phenom of the World Wrestling Federation and one of the most athletically gifted big men to ever grace a squared circle, the Undertaker had only one short championship run to show for it prior to *WrestleMania* 13. The anticipation surrounding the Undertaker's colossal showdown with Sycho Sid was immense, as the Heartbreak Kid Shawn Michaels made his way to ringside as a color commentator.

Before these two superstars could lock up, the undisputed self-pitying champion of the Federation, Bret Hart, also walked to the ring. Hart whined about not getting the proper respect before Sid powerbombed him, just to keep him quiet. As the fans were sent into a happy frenzy at the sight of Sid's attack on Hart, the Undertaker recognized his first opportunity.

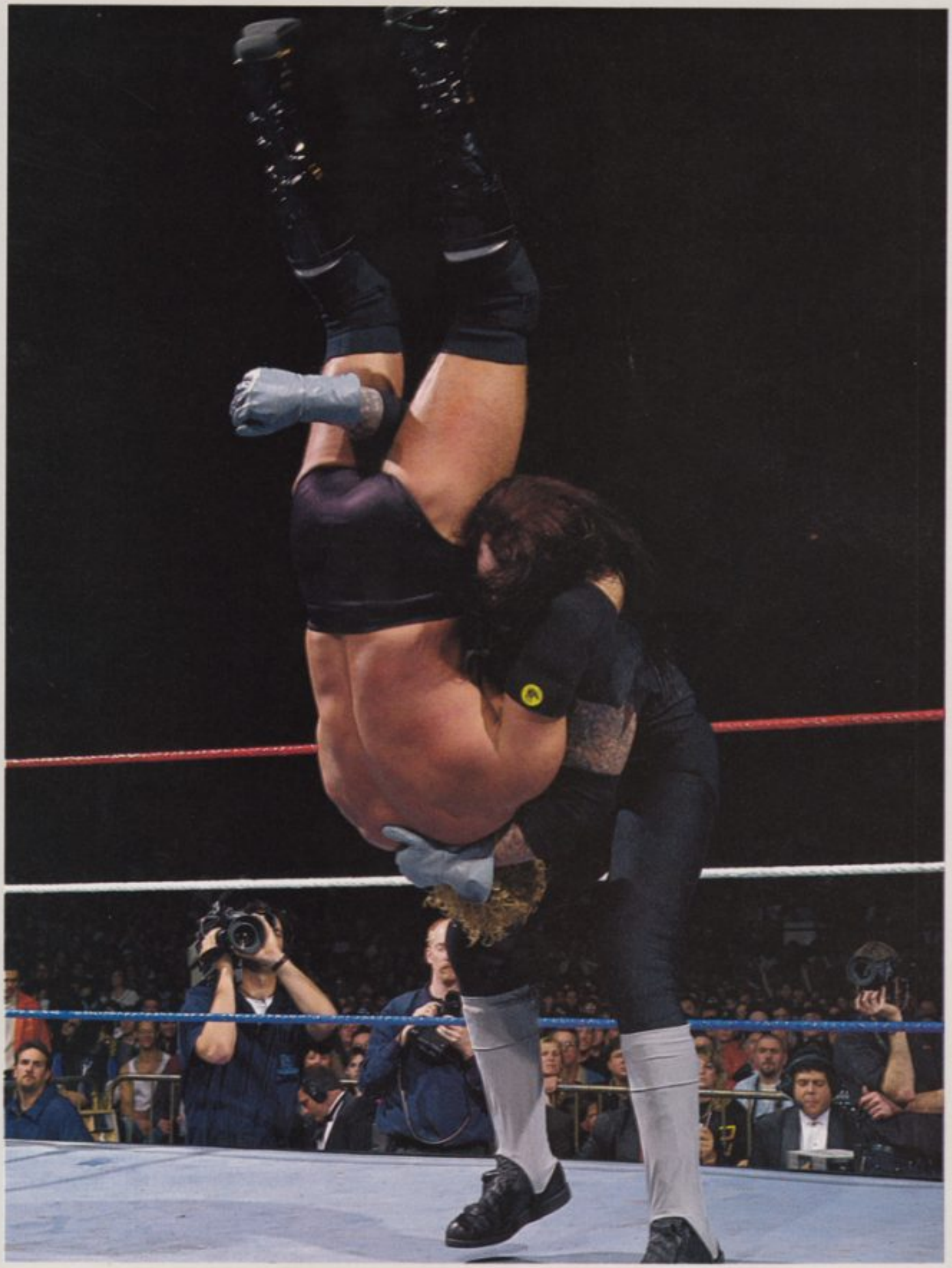
The Phenom wasted no time in getting all over Sid as the champion had his attention focused on watching Hart carried off. Continuing his all-out assault, the Undertaker threw Sid into the corner and walloped him with a number of brutal punches, kicks and a powerslam before attempting the quick pin. Although unsuccessful in his bid for the win, the Undertaker remained in control of the contest.

Realizing how effective his attack had been thus far, the Undertaker elected to continue to do much the same. Sid was ready the next time the Phenom came crashing into the turnbuckle, however, and was able to catch the challenger and hold onto him with a bear hug. Sid was able to keep a tight grip for what seemed like an eternity, but the Undertaker was not about to give up. It finally dawned on the champion that he was never going to get the Phenom to submit, so he changed his strategy.

A number of clotheslines and a big boot to the face were enough to stagger the Undertaker, but not knock him down. Apparently frustrated with his inability to have any lasting effect on



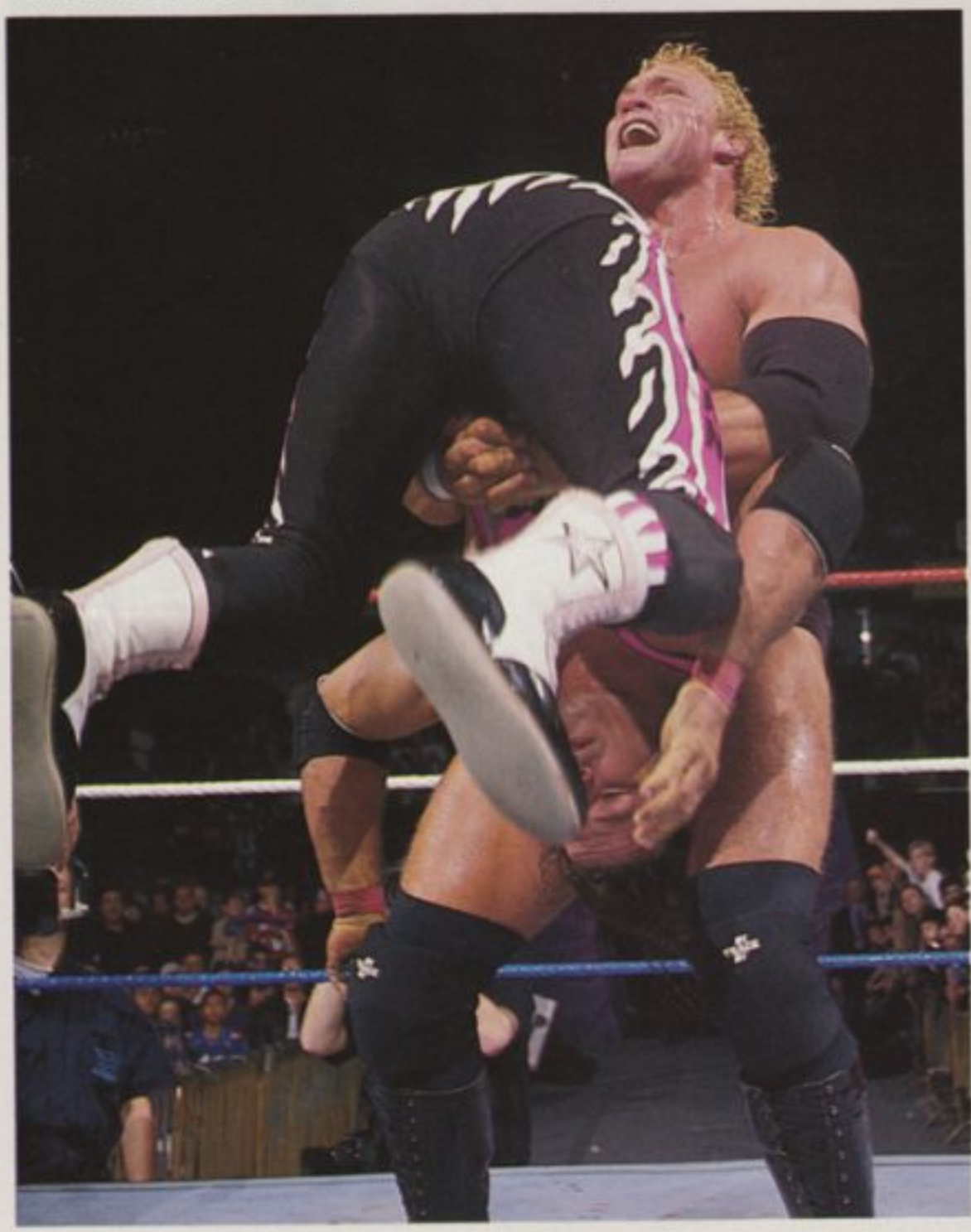
(Left to right) In this battle of two of the biggest monsters in the Federation, Sycho Sid attempted to match power with the challenger through a series of clotheslines and legdrops. The Man from the Dark Side refused to submit, however, and answered with an assault of his own.



the challenger, Sid threw his opponent out of the ring. Just as he has done in the past, though, the Undertaker flipped out over the top rope and right onto his feet! When both behemoths were on the outside, Sid got vicious. He slammed the Undertaker over a table before dropping him neck-first across the steel guardrail surrounding the ring area.

Eventually the official convinced the superstars to continue their battle in the ring. Inside the ropes, Sid remained in control of the match, but not for long. The Undertaker was able to shift the momentum by landing a number of crushing right hands to Sid's abdominal region and then he elected to move the brawl to the outside of the ring. The two enemies were among the fans trading blows before the Undertaker's superior strength won out. Soon remembering that there was no way he could become the next champion on the outside of the squared circle, the Phenom forced his opponent back in.

Sid was able to duck one of the Undertaker's intimidating clotheslines and hit one of his own. The champion continued his assault, but—perhaps foolishly—decided to incorporate an aerial attack into his offensive repertoire. Although he was able to hit with a number of double ax-handles from the middle rope, Sid could not keep the Undertaker down for long. Somehow the champion was even able to reverse a Tombstone so that the Undertaker was on the business end, but Sid could not keep the determined challenger on the mat for the three-count.



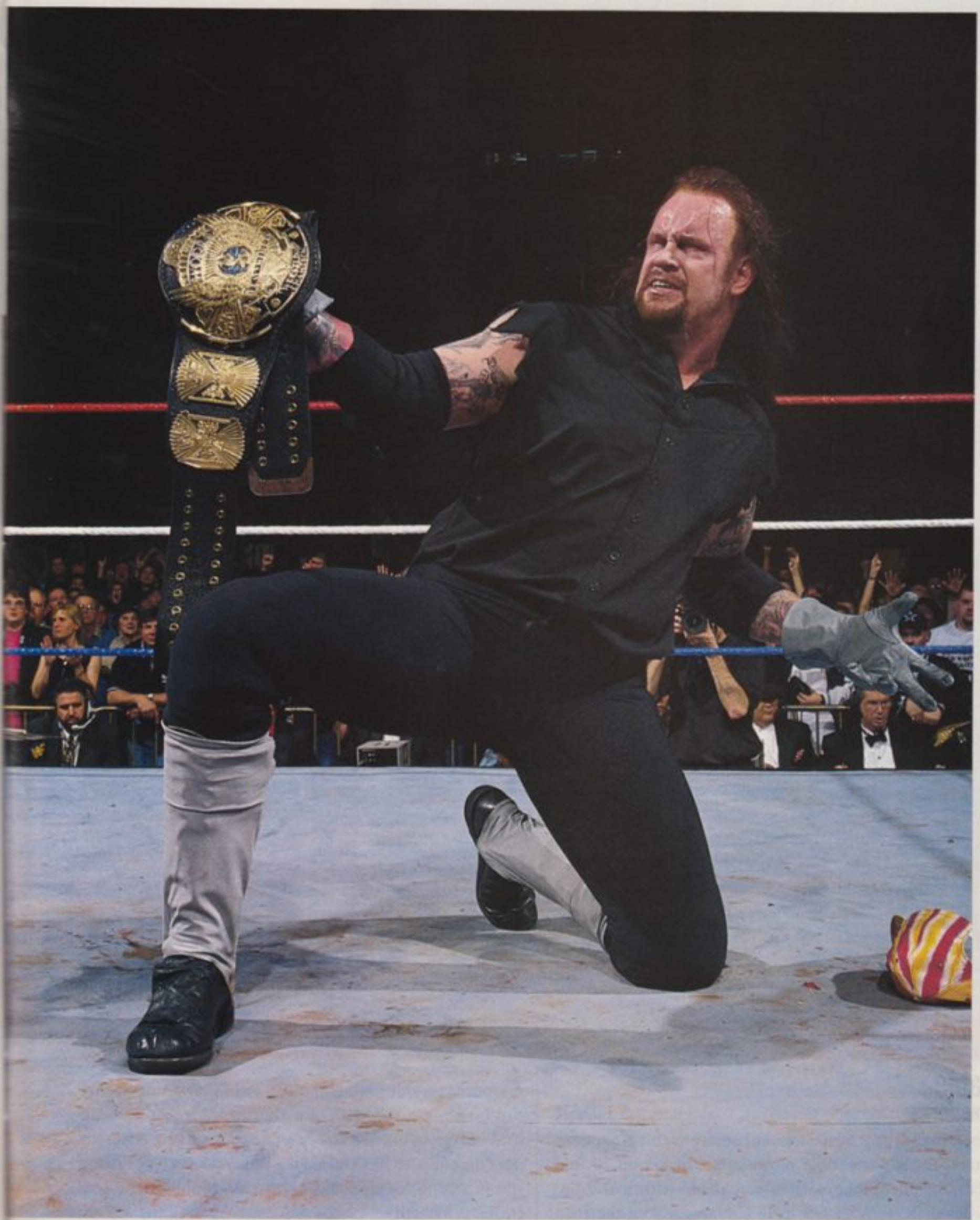
Sid then got greedy and tried to connect with one more shot off the top rope, but this time the challenger was able to counter the attack and send the champion down to the canvas instead. Showing the champion who the more agile of the two was, the Undertaker climbed the ropes and nailed Sid with a flying clothesline.

Continuing his "what about me?" campaign, Bret Hart returned to the ringside area and once again drew the attention of Sid. You'd have thought Sid would have learned from his mistake after the first time, but the champion turned his back on the Undertaker and paid for it dearly once more. The challenger picked up his opponent as if he was a small child and rammed his back into the steel ring posts.

Hart refused to leave and jumped up on the ring apron once Sid and the Undertaker were back in the ring. You'd have thought Sid would have learned from his mistake after the first two times, but the champion turned his back on the Undertaker and paid for it dearly once more. Hart hit Sid with a neckbreaker and the challenger capitalized on it immediately.

The Undertaker grabbed Sid and set him up for the Tombstone. After connecting with his devastating finishing move, the Phenom easily pinned the champion and claimed the top prize in the World Wrestling Federation for the second time in his illustrious career. ■

(Left) Prior to the championship bout, former titleholder Bret Hart earned a Powerbomb from Sid. (Right) The Undertaker earned the title victory with a Tombstone Piledriver to Sid, thanks to Hart's interference!



Fantasy Warfare

Sable vs. Wendi Richter

BY BILL BANKS

When Jacqueline defeated Sable for the World Wrestling Federation Women's Championship on an October 1998 *RAW*, it marked the first time the title had been contested since former champion Alundra Blayze abandoned the gold in 1995. The following month at the *Survivor Series:* "Deadly Game" tournament, the femme fatale returned the favor—and subsequently created a newfound following and enthusiasm for the future of the division. Back in 1984, another young and gifted female athlete named Wendi Richter rejuvenated the women's ranks, defeating longtime titleholder the Fabulous Moolah in the culmination of "Rock 'n' Wrestling" which was broadcast live on MTV. Which one of these two decorated Federation Women's Champions would claim victory against the other? It's a match made for the arena of Fantasy Warfare!

Sable

STRENGTHS:

Since dedicating herself to becoming a full-time combatant, Sable's wrestling prowess has increased 10-fold. Also, she keeps herself in top form—often training harder than many of her male counterparts on the road! A student of kickboxing and the martial arts, the beauty can take out a foe with one shot to the chest or head if necessary. And the Sable of 1999 is much different from the one who first entered the Federation in 1996. Today she is strong, outspoken, confident and not afraid to challenge authority.

WEAKNESSES:

Because Sable has only been actively competing since last October, she lacks much of the ring veteranship of superstars Jacqueline and Luna—who have been battling inside the squared circle for much of their lives.

KEY WINS:

Sable's first in-ring venture came at *WrestleMania* XIV, when she teamed with her former love interest, "Marvelous" Marc Mero, to defeat Goldust and Luna. That night, the blonde beauty pinned her foe following her wildly popular Sable Bomb. At *SummerSlam*: "Highway To Hell", Sable sided with Edge to down Mero and Jacqueline—electrifying the Madison Square Garden crowd with a Sablecanrana in the process. Her most recent accomplishment came at the 1998 *Survivor Series:* "Deadly Game" tournament when Sable upset Jacqueline for the women's championship reign.

KEY LOSSES:

At last April's "Unforgiven" Pay-Per-View, Luna beat Sable in the first Evening Gown Match. One month later at "Over The Edge" the femme fatale would suffer a devastating loss to Mero, who duped his former love interest and sent her packing out of the World Wrestling Federation. Due to her overwhelming financial value to his company, however, Mr. McMahon rehired her. Then at July's "Fully Loaded" Sable seemingly won her Bikini Match with Jacqueline, only to be disqualified by Mr. McMahon for her choice of attire, or lack thereof.

FINISHER:

As stated, the champion's Sable Bomb and Sablecanrana—her versions of the Powerbomb and Hurricanrana—have become two of the more popular and devastating finishers in the Federation. When Sable hit "Marvelous" with the Sablecanrana at last year's *SummerSlam*, Madison Square Garden erupted. When she planted Jacqueline prone with the Sable Bomb at the *Survivor Series* "Deadly Game" tournament, it earned her the women's title.

(Left) Sable keeps herself in top physical condition—here tossing Jacqueline—and is a student of the martial arts. (Above) Wendi Richter excelled at brawling, a talent she learned growing up in Texas.

STRATEGY:

Sable would be wise to take the fight straight to Wendi Richter. Thanks to the beauty's physical conditioning and prowess in kickboxing, she would damage Richter

with an offense the former champion rarely faced. If Sable can fend off her foe's rugged assault, she would most likely finish Richter off with either the Sable Bomb or Sablecanrana.

Wendi Richter

STRENGTHS:

Wendi Richter was a female competitor who rivaled the toughness of her male counterparts in her heyday. In addition to her grappling skills, the former superstar excelled at pounding her opponents with brawling tactics

to gain the upper hand. Wendi grew up in the rough and tumble world of west Texas and found an outlet for aggression in rodeo competitions. And despite her charismatic personality outside the ring, the superstar turned cold and dominating when it was time for battle. Her speed was also a valuable asset, as she was able to outmaneuver more ground-based competitors such as the Fabulous Moolah and Leilani Kai.

WEAKNESSES:

Because of her lack of size and muscle, Richter was unable to absorb tremendous amounts of punishment. If opponents were able to ground her and keep her speed contained, they had the best chance of wearing her down.

KEY WINS:

In the summer of 1984, pop rocker Cyndi Lauper challenged Captain Lou Albano to have his protege, the Fabulous Moolah, defend her women's title against Richter. The bout, which aired to a national audience on MTV and ushered in the era of Rock 'n' Wrestling, saw Richter beating Moolah for the gold. After losing the championship to Kai the following February, Richter regained the title at the inaugural *WrestleMania* in New York City's Madison Square Garden on March 31, 1985.

KEY LOSSES:

As stated, Richter lost her first title to Kai—then managed by Moolah—in early 1985. The female superstar's second and final reign came to an end that November, as Moolah—under the guise of the "Spider Lady"—defeated her rival for her fourth Federation Women's Championship. After the bout, Moolah unmasked to reveal her true identity, a devastating blow Richter was unable to recover from.

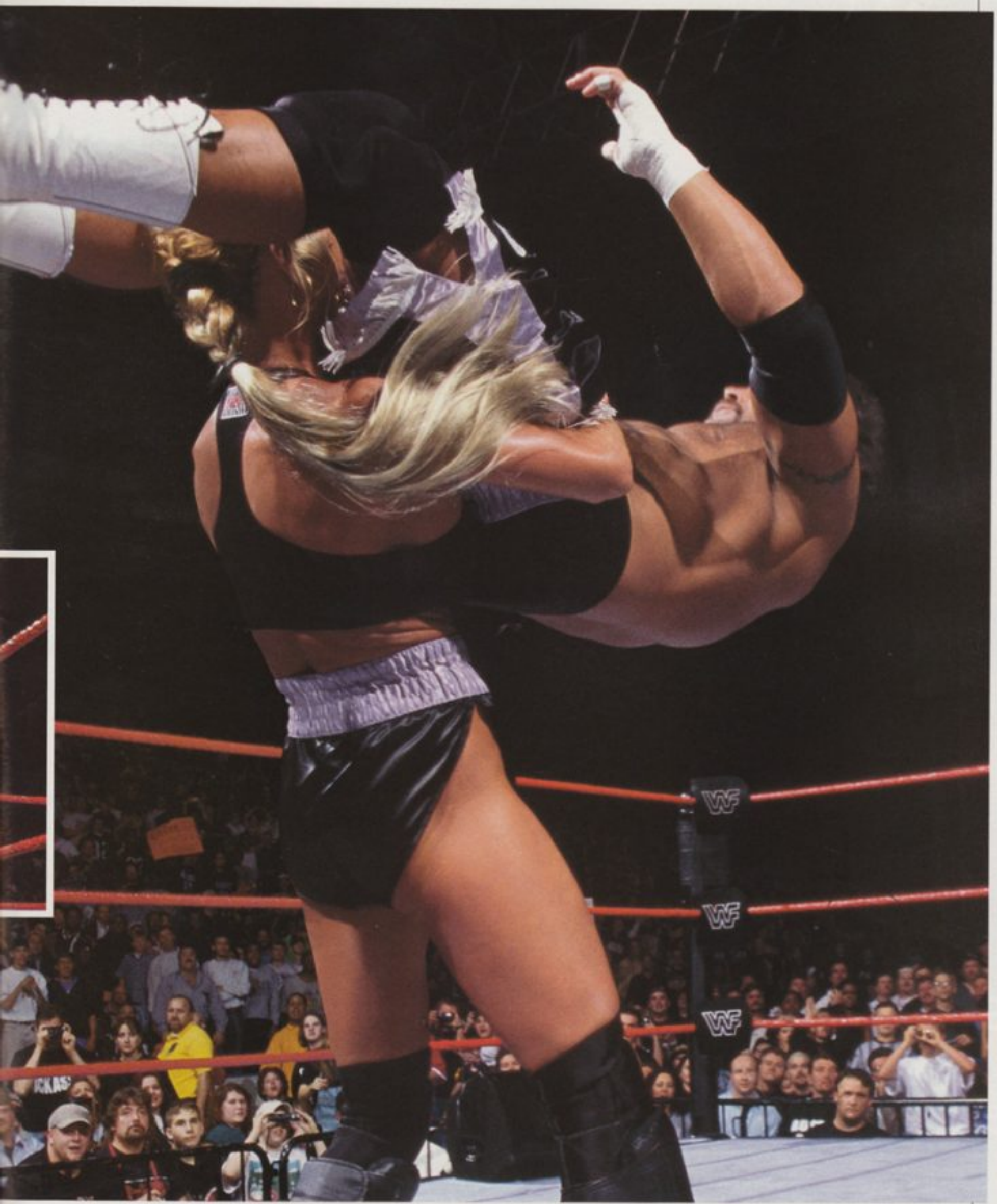
FINISHER:

Richter didn't use any one particular hold to finish off opponents. Rather she relied on punishing her adversaries with flurries of stinging dropkicks and clotheslines. What she did excel at was countering holds. A classic example of this was when she beat Moolah during their 1984 match in Madison Square Garden. While Moolah had the challenger seemingly beaten with a full nelson, Richter placed her feet on the bottom rope and launched herself and the champion backwards—resulting in a pin Moolah wasn't able to escape from.

STRATEGY:

In their heyday, Richter and other female grapplers were not accustomed to defending against the powerful maneuvers employed by the modern women's division. In order to avoid Sable's offense, Richter should simply try to out-fight her opponent. However, the femme fatale has faced such a strategy from Luna in the past and eventually rose to the occasion. Richter was a wrestling phenomenon during the 80s, but today's female combatants are stronger and more technically sound. Richter may succeed in damaging her "Fantasy Warfare" foe, but even the former women's champion wouldn't be able to endure the bout once Sable dropped the Bomb on her! ■

(Left to right) In her heyday, Richter's biggest weakness was her lack of size and muscle. Stronger opponents, such as Fabulous Moolah, could wear her down. Sable today isn't afraid to battle male counterparts such as Goldust or Marc Mero if necessary!



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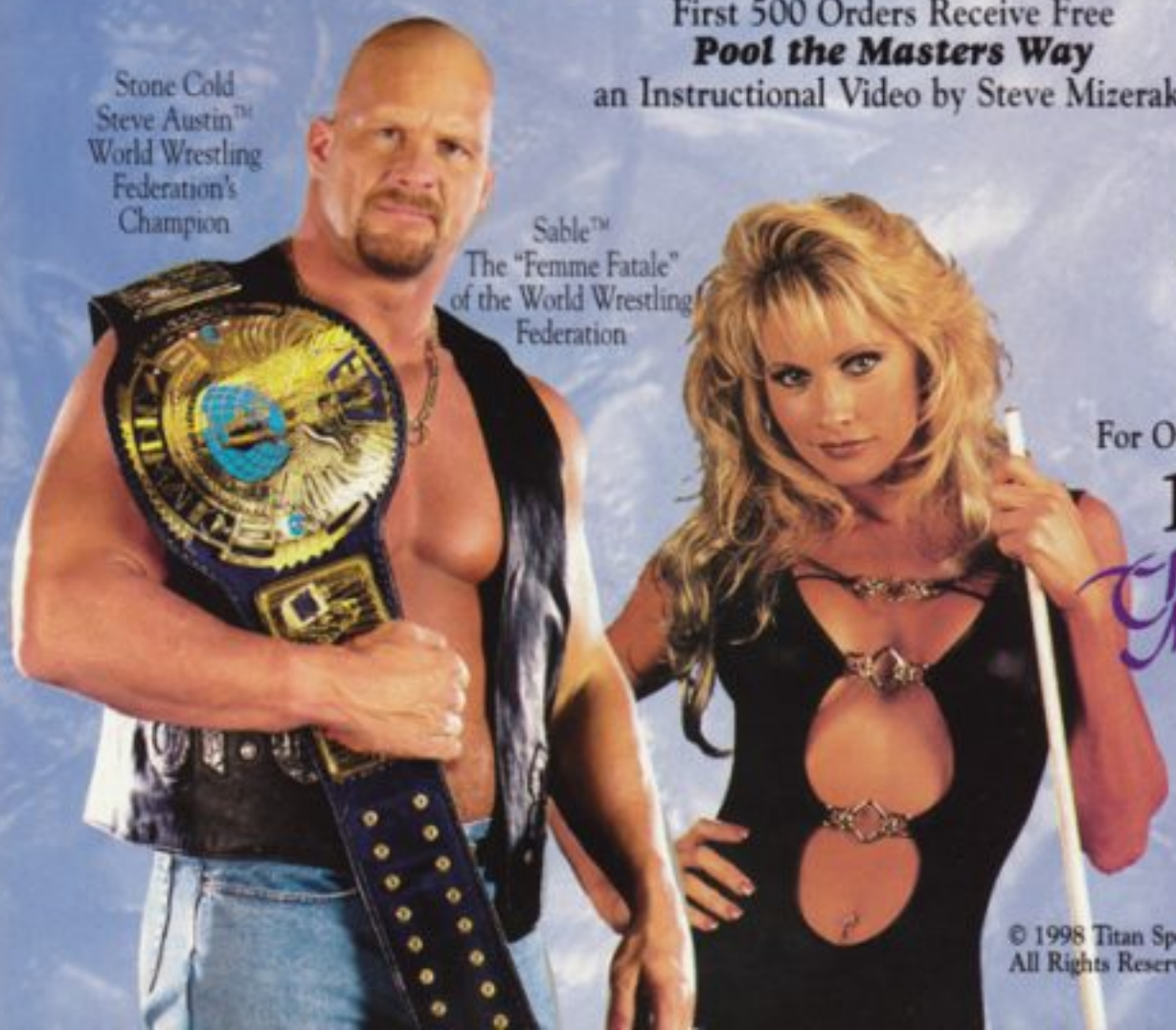

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